VEDIC MEDITATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CHAKRA

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VEDIC MEDITATION

Chapter 1

Brahmayajna

Maharshi Dayananda Saraswati has advised Aryas to perform 5 Mahayajnas daily. They are - Brahmayajna, Devayajna, Pitryajna, Atithiyajna and Baliveishvadevayajna. Sandhyaa is the part of Brahmayajna that includes Swaadhyaaya - study of scriptures, introspection and meditation.

The word "Brahmayajna" is made of two syllables "Brahma" and "Yajna". "Brahma means 'God' or `Knowledge'. The word "Yajna" is derived from the verb root "Yaj" that has 3 meanings - "Devapoojaa", "Sangatikarana" and "Daana".

The word 'Devapoojaa' has two words, i.e., Deva and Poojaa. Deva is a person or a thing that helps all without a desire for any return for the service and works directly under the discipline of God. That is why all planets and stars as well as other things of the world that have been created by God for the benefit of His children are called gods. They work under the disicpline of God and do never desire for any return from persons. Similarly, the wise persons that work for the people, society or country without any selfish motive are called Devas. Poojaa = Poojanam = Satkaarah. Poojaa means worship and worship means to give importance to a worthy person or thing. For example, when a son or daughter gives importance to his/her parents that are living with him/her and seeks for their advice in some case or listens to them he/

she gives them importance. In the present context "Devapoojaa" means to honour, respect, love God, and give value to His importance, i.e., never to neglect Him at any cost and have full faith in Him, Who is the greatest Deva (Mahadeva).

When a person sits for Poojaa he must completely forget about the worldly things and think only about Him. No other thoughts or actions should interrupt the Poojaa. One must give more importance to the devotion than any other thing. The best formula is that a person should concentrate completely on a thing he has taken in his hand. The same formula should be applied here, too. I have seen a few people attending to phone calls during Poojaa. It means that they give more importance to the worldly calls, people and affairs than to the Spiritual call and God; that God can wait, while the person calling should not because he is more important and needs immediate attention and therefore, he must be attended to first, that they were not actually concentrated on Him while apparently they showed to be so by doing worship or chanting Mantras and names; that they do not think it to be their impertinence to leave God unattended though it is against the normal courtesy in connection with the worldly people; that they do not know that to leave God in the middle of Poojaa is really an insult to God just as it is so to leave a guest during the talks and go away for some other work. In the worldly affairs one can easily ask to be excused and attend to some other work because the guest can listen to him, but how can he apologise to God Who is not in the position of listening and agreeing to his excuses? Therefore, one should not leave Pooja in the middle either for attending phone calls or welcoming guests or attending to some other duties of the world. The best way is to sit for Poojaa either before attending to worldly jobs

or after having finished them. In no case the attention should be diverted. When a person sits for Poojaa, he should be sure that he does not see, hear or think any thing else than God, His Name or Mantra.

Besides, for Poojaa one should select a place where he does not expect any fear or danger to be encountered, or is not bothered by mosquito bites so that he does not have to pray to God like "Please protect me from wild animals and insects like scorpions and snakes while I am meditating on You" (like we find the meanings of some Sandhyaa Mantras in a few books). Is it not ridiculous to think of worldly fears and dangers when we are expected to have been completely absorbed in God? Actually, a real devotee who is completely absorbed in meditation has no chance to think about these things. For him his body and self do not exist. He should actually never be perturbed even amidst the great noise all around because none of his senses of hearing, seeing and touching, etc. are in contact with any outward object. He, being introvert all the streams of his senses must be flowing in. He Sees, Feels and Hears nothing but Brahman and with Brahman being with Him his mind is completely stabilised, full of ecstasy, peace and happiness. He has raised himself beyond the stage of awakening and dreaming. The stage of Dhyaanam is identical with that of 'Sushupti' - the stage of fast asleep, where all the faculties of mind and senses are completely inactive, is everything asleep and only the soul is awake that keeps talking to Brahman. **"Samaadhi - Sushupti - Moksheshu Brahmaroopataa" - i.e., in Samaadhi and Sushupti the soul is in union with Brahman just as it is in salvation**. In Sushupti the soul is in contact with God and He, like a good father, advises it a number of things that it agrees to follow, but once it is awakened it comes again in the contact of senses and worldly

objects and the waves of the worldly passions and pleasures envelope its 'Understanding' and it forgets all its promises made to the Father during Sushupti. It acts just like a weak-minded husband who is overpowered by his wife. He, under the influence of blind love to his wife, does a number of things that are not good for the family and are thus against the injunction of God. When his father sees this plight he becomes very sad and talks to him privately and convinces him that he is going on a wrong way. His understanding is refurbished. He promises to his father that he will keep his advice in mind and shall try to work accordingly so that the name of the family is not tarnished. But once he is with his wife he forgets all his promises done to his father and starts working under the influence of blind love and her sweet words. In Dhyaanam the soul, that is nothing but light, is merged in Brahman - THE LIGHT, **"Sam Jyotishaa Jyotih"** - the light mixes with the Light and becomes one (Yajurveda). At that stage the soul is not only beyond 'Tamas' and 'Rajas' but also 'Sattwa', because it is only when the soul rises above 'Sattwa' that it is able to perceive Brahman. It runs towards Him like a child rushes towards his mother when he happens to see her after the lapse of a long working day or like a calf that runs to its mother when the cow comes from the field after having been grazing all day long. Once the soul is with its Father/Mother how can it leave Him/Her and return to the world where it does not have anything but the noise and quarrels.

This state of soul (and not of mind) is called real Poojaa. In Malayalam, (the language of Kerala, South India), the 'zero' is called "POOJYAM" that in Sanskrit means 'worthy of worship', 'respectable', 'honourable'. A person is honoured, respected and adored when he becomes 'NAUGHT', feels his existence having

disappeared and this happens when the soul rises beyond mind, because "I" ness or Ego is the part of mind. When the soul is attached with mind it thinks in the terms of "I" and when it is attached with the body it thinks in the terms of "I am eating/seeing/ hearing/working/speaking/touching", etc.

"Devapoojaa" also means that a devotee should have full faith and confidence in God. He should know that the Father never punishes anyone, never wants to put anyone in troubles. He should have the firm belief that 'whatever pains or pleasures he is having are not sent by God but are the result of his own 'Sanskaras' that are left behind by the 'Karmas' - actions he does. The people talk of "Karmic theory" but actually it is the theory of "Sanskaras". The Karma is just like a fly. A fly comes from a place, sits and flies away to another place. It comes and flies but in the process it leaves some dirt or filth behind that is not perceivable by these physical eyes but only through a microscope. Similarly, when a person does any Karma it is started and finished but in the process it leaves behind some Sanskaras in the mind that are stored in 'Chittam'. They cannot be seen by an ordinary person with his physical eyes but only by a wise one with his internal eyes developed through Yogic practices. For example, suppose a person helps a poor fellow giving him some money and starts trumpeting his generosity and kind-heartedness. Here, giving out charity is a Karma. The Karma has been finished but has left the Sanskara of 'Desire' for spreading his name that would instigate people to honour him, satisfy his 'ego' and enable him to show himself superior to those he hates or are his enemies. Thus, a noble act of generosity (that is a good job in itself) has created three bad Sanskaras in him - greed, ego and hatred. Thus, unknowingly, a Sukarma has created bad Sanskaras

instead of good ones and has become `Dushkarma' or a sin. Though the Karma won't stay long but the Sanskaras created by it will be stored in Chittam the collection of which will become "**Praarabdha**" and determine the kind of the body the soul should bear in the next birth as also the length of the period (called "AAYU") it should stay in that body until all Sanskaras are exhausted by being consumed during the life. Thus, a wise man who knows all these things well, understands that it is not God to blame for the pains and sufferings he goes through in his life but his own Sanskaras collected knowingly or unknowingly by himself in his life. The pains and sufferings warn a wise man not to repeat the same and help him in improving himself, while the pleasures encourage and inspire him to keep doing virtuous deeds and move on the righteous path with more vigour and enthusiasm. Thus, both pains and pleasures are good things for a wise man. (The only way for getting rid of the bondage of life and death is to undergo sufferings because it is only they that, like fire, cut the chains). Once a person knows these secrets of Karmic theory he never blames God, but develops full faith in Him and thanks Him even when he encounters some obstacles. Instead of blaming Him and promising not to worship Him any more (like a common man does), he says, "O God! I am thankful to You for giving me the strength for facing the calamity that has made me wiser and also has broken my chains of bondage." A wise man, therefore , never writhes in pains or blames God, because he has full confidence in Him and knows that "his Father is always good to him". Confidence and absolute faith in God are very essential for succeeding in Dhyaanam, because it is only this kind of confidence that cleanses his mind that is necessary for moving on the path of meditation.

Body and mind are also Devas and to give them importance is Devapoojaa. When we eat some junk food we get stomach-ache. That is the voice of the body. Just as the mind speaks to us in the form of thoughts the body also speaks. Whenever we have pain in any part of the body that is the warning from the body. Similarly we have fever, cold, flu, and other diseases. They are all warnings. This warning from the body tells us that we have failed in giving it the importance it deserves. Listening to our body and giving only the things that suit it best is the best way of respecting it. Those who go against this principle and impose their own decisions on it insult that Deva and Consequently they suffer for their arrogance. Mostly the people are sick because they do not care for the body. The value of a part of the body becomes clear to the people when it aches or becomes unable to work. Therefore, we should never ignore any part of the body.

Similarly, when we take too much of work from our brain or body they fail to carry out our instructions. and we fall ill. The mind is also Deva. Those who insult it by forcing it to take drugs, wines and other unsuitable things enjoy the punishment for their foolishness. The brain is the center of the mind and is the headquarters of this great kingdom - i.e., the body. All subtle elements that control the whole body like pituitary gland, pineal gland, Thalamus, hypothalamus, etc., are all seated in this region alone. The brain contains 1000 billion neurones and the drugs and wines kill a number of these valuable elements. Those who do not take a special care of this region bècome mentally weak and consequently develop tensions, worries, depressions and other fatal diseases. Therefore, we must never fail in worshipping these highly significant Devas.

The soul is the most important Deva. We should honour it by giving it the importance it deserves. The soul is the master, the owner of the body. Those who with foolishness turn it into a servant or a tenant are destroyed not only in the present life but in ensuring births, too. When a wife, controlled by her ego, dominates her husband he grows into a weak-minded hen-packed householder. Consequently, he feels lost when a problem overcomes the family. The children, who know his weakness, do not care for him and do not listen to his instructions. They also know that the mother is wrong and so they ignore her, too. The result is that the whole house turns into a living hell. Similarly, when the soul is overpowered by mind and senses the life becomes miserable, because the soul alone is conscious element in the body, all others are inanimate. It is the conscious soul that should take decisions. When it is disciplined by these inanimate things the soul, too, acts like inanimate. It misses its consciousness. Therefore, we should never allow our minds and senses to dominate the soul. We should give prominence to the self. That is called "**Aatmadeva - Poojaa**".

As explained earlier giving importance to a thing it deserves is called Poojaa. Suppose we have parents living with us. The parents are generally wiser and more experienced than their children are or they think them to be. But we do not give any importance to them. We hate to consult them in our day to day problems or plans. We think it is enough if we greet them every morning and evening while going out and coming home and give them food regularly. It is not so. The parents deserve more hospitality, they wish to be talked and given importance in the day to day life of the household and be treated as a part of the family. Those who give that value to them really do their Poojaa. Normally,

when we lead our lives we ask our souls to supply power to the mind and senses and then compel him to follow chittam and do as it says. Thus, instead of worshiping soul we worship Chittam. This is not Devapoojaa. We must worship the soul that is Deva. We must ask our mind and senses to follow the orders of the soul, the master of the body by whose kindness they have been supplied with power to act. When we worship the soul we collect positive vita, while we collect the negative one when we worship Chittam and mind. Another marvel with this is that it is only the soul that can develop contact with God, not the senses or mind and when the soul is with God the negative attitudes like disappointment, depression, confusion, suspicion, etc., fade away and never enter into us because, all these things enter into the mind, not in the soul, and when the mind is disciplined by the soul accompanied by God, they never dare to enter into the mind. The 'positivity' is called "AMRITAM" while 'negativity' is called "MRITYU". That is what the following Mantra from Yajurveda says,

"**Yasya Chhaayaa Amritam Yaṣya Mrityuh.**"

Keeping oneself under the shelter of God brings positivity in a person while keeping away from Him brings negativity. When a person does bad deeds, however devoted he may be to Him, he keeps away from the shelter of God. On the other hand when he does good deeds, he follows the instructions of God and so God loves him and keeps him under His shelter. As soon as a person is deprived of the shelter of God due to his disobedience to Him, he comes, automatically, under the shelter of Mrityu. In other words, we may say that when a person gives more importance to the mind and senses and makes his soul subservient to them, he is driven away from God

and that state deprives him of the ability to draw positive thoughts from Brahman as well as from cosmos. Why does he fail to draw the positive vita from the cosmos? Because, the things in the Universe are following the rules of that Great King, and once the soul goes against the injunctions of God, goes against the Universal Law, too, and so, naturally, the soul is away from the cosmos. That is why, even doctors now plead to go according to the nature and be friendly with her. When we go against the nature (that includes the nature of our bodies, too) she becomes our enemy and we are too weak to encounter the aggression by the nature. Therefore, we must obey God so that we are with the nature, our Mother. When we obey God and follow His injunctions, we are loved by nature and she enables us to draw only positive vita from the cosmos that, in turn, strengthens our immune system which increases our power to resistance and we are never victim of any kinds of diseases. This is true regarding all diseases physical, mental or spiritual. Positivity is called "AMRITAM" - nectar in the above mantra because it helps a person in attaining to longevity, while negativity is like "MRITYU" because it shortens our lives. Negative attitudes and thoughts draw the negative vita from the cosmos that weakens the immune system in a person and resultingly he is always a victim of one or another disease. All these weaknesses in mind, heart and body are called "Rudras" in Yajurveda, Chapter 16 because they cause a person to weep and cry. These Rudras are the messengers of Yama - the death. Just like a person in a jungle keeps the fire burning for keeping the wild animals away, even so, a wise person should keep the Supreme Fire (Brahman) burning in himself, so it creates positive vita that strengthens the immune system and drives away all intellectual, mental and physical diseases.

SANGATIKARANAM: Another meaning of "Yajna" is Sangatikarana that means 'to assemble' (assembling different parts and making a machine is also a Yajna); 'to organise (organising an assembly, a conference, or a concert that helps in elevating the soul is also a Yajna); 'to harmonise', 'to create harmony, unity and mutual understanding', 'to create an amicable atmosphere where everyone works with love having one aim, object, purpose and thought', 'to march in a united way as the soldiers do', 'to take the listeners to the state where their minds become one with that of the speaker', and 'to develop mutual understanding between two parties like teacher and taught, husband and wife, parents and children, etc.' Thus, the societies, governments, business-houses, bodies and machines are all different forms of Yajna because the members or parts in them must work hand in hand for their progress. When a soul asserts to make all its senses, parts and vital powers of its body to work in co-operation and co-ordination, it performs a Yajna. When a person attempts to draw all his senses and mind for concentrating on one object or thought (called Yoga) he does Yajna. When a person tries to take his soul beyond the worldly objects and necessities, his senses, mind and all the three Gunas (Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas) so that the soul may be set itself in the Self and proceed towards God to meet Him He does Yajna. Thus, "Brahmayajna" means to try to elevate the soul and bring it to the state where it meets God and becomes one with Him (**Tad Apashyat Tad Abhavat Tad Aaseet-Yajurveda, chapter 22** - he saw Him, he became HE, he is HE).

DAANAM - The third meaning of Yajna is 'to give out, sacrifice, submit, donate, tithing, etc. To spare time for a noble work is nothing but Yajna. The world, the body, and all other gifts given by God to the soul

are not merely for enjoying them and satisfying the needs of his body and mind. Just like a person is given pocket money to purchase the things he requires in his life, the gifts given by God are for spending and utilising them for obtaining the things required by a soul for its upliftment. Let us have some examples-

TIME - Time is the most valuable gift the god has given to the mankind. It is to be exchanged for the things a soul requires for its upliftment. A person who spends time in studying good books, attending religious congregations, chanting the names of God, doing benevolent deeds, practicing Yoga, performing Yajnas, discussing good things, advising people for their happiness and peace, propagating the message of God for removing ignorance and attaining Union with God through meditation, etc., uses it in a beautiful and beneficial way. The time is a free and never ending gift from God that can be utilised by a soul as much as it wants. When a person gets sick and spends time for rest and recovery he does a right job, but when he spends it unnecessarily in lying down and sleeping, etc., he is buying idleness, lethargy and Tamas that blocks the way of the soul's progress. When a person utilises his time in some activities not only he buys energy for the soul but also buys good Sanskaras through the benevolent deeds that would enable him to choose a suitable body in the next birth. When a person spends his valuable time in writing books he buys five valuable things with the time so spent - practices meditation, collects the knowledge, enhances the memorising power, increases his understanding and enhances the power of explaining and analysing the deepest and subtlest things. Thus, the time spent in noble deeds like explained above makes a man richer, increases his power, intellect, spirit and energy. When a person spends his time in practising Yoga,

taking exercises or performing Asanas and Pranayamas he buys strength for the body, purification of blood, sharpness of mind, energy for the soul as well as intellectual, mental and spiritual health. The time spent in meditation, prayer and worship brings a person peace of mind, strength in nerves and veins and the stability of mind. See, how well one can spend the time, the valuable gift given by God. When we draw a time-table or schedule for our daily duties we get prepared to utilise the time in our hands in the best possible way. Therefore, one should be very careful in spending this valuable gift and should bargain it with great wisdom and foresightedness. One should spend each and every second in such a way that it brings something more useful for the body, mind and spirit. Every moment should pass filled with beautiful thoughts, ideas, resolutions and actions. Just like the containers hanging in a Persian wheel go down empty into the well but when they come up they bring water and pour into drum, even so the senses should go out contact the objects and collect the information and ideas and enrich the soul with them. That is what God tells us in the first Mantra of Yajurveda - "**Apyaayadhvam Aghnyaah Indraaya Bhaagam** - i.e. the senses should never be killed but left free to contact the objects and enrich **INDRA** (the soul) with all suitable information that becomes his part and help it in the long journey."

The time is wasted and killed when it is bargained for useless things, worse commodities or spiritual deterioration. When, a person spends his time in watching bad movies, talking nonsense, backbiting and criticising others, mourning the past or digging the buried events and thus disturbing his own mind, he does not only kill the time but also buys a number of diseases, disturbances, depressions, worries and

tensions that take away his peace of mind and gets mad. Such a person does not know the value of the time he has been gifted by God and resultingly he loses His favour and is deprived of this precious gift in the next birth. His soul is sent in such a body where he has no knowledge of the time and spends his life in the open braving cold, heat and rains and standing upside down waiting for the last hour of the life. What a pity!

INTELLIGENCE: - Power of understanding, analysing, desiring, resolving, concentrating, speaking, hearing, seeing, observing, determining and deciding etc., are all precious gifts given by God. One should utilise these powers in such a way that they bring only good things for the body, mind and soul and is never wasted in useless things.

CHILDREN : - Children are the best gifts. The parents are given these gifts not for using them for selfish motives but for working for God. When a soul is sent to a family in the form of a child God wants the parents to devote all their energy and time for bringing him/her in such a way that the soul is pleased to have them because they are helping it in its progress. The parents that fail in their duties are never given children in the next lives. When the parents, instead, know their responsibilities and fulfil them with all earnestness, arrange for their best education and training not only to help them in the materialistic world but also in the spiritual one, and never wait for any return from them when they are old, they collect a number of virtues for the next life and are gifted with the best kinds of children. The children that are the best educated, morally upright, spiritually uplifted, obedient, honest, devoid of any kinds of bad habits and are assets to the family, society and nation are the most valuable wealth. According to the injunctions

of God one should give them out for the benefit of the world and doing the work for God. This is the spirit with which the Sikhs worked in the past. The first child in their families was offered for the promotion of Dharma. "**Yajadhvam Havishaa Tanaa Giraa**" - perform the Yajna of life not only with the offering of materials but also with your speech and children - Yajuh. The children, in Sanskrit, are called "Santaana" because they are expected to spread the fame of the family as well as the message of God. Therefore, it is the duty of the parents to see that their children take part in religious activities, attend religious congregations regularly, study the books on righteousness and develop in the company of good noble people. In the modern age the children are away from all these things, because the parents do not fill their minds with good ideas from the beginning and their empty minds are, instead, filled with dirty ideas and thoughts that take them away from the right paths. Once they are adults, they do not care for what the parents say and choose their own paths that are mostly detrimental to the expectations of the parents. Then, the parents, instead of looking into themselves and finding out the causes for this unwanted development in the family, blame the `new generation', `teenagers' and `youths'. Just as we prepare "**Prasaadam**" for God with great reverence, love and devotion, we must prepare our children, too, because they are to be offered to God and encouraged to work for Him. The parents, that do not put their minds in these things from the very beginning, are caught in great problems and their own children become the cause of their tensions and worries that take them towards early death. Instead of becoming the assets to the parents, family, society and nation they become great problems. Such parents become sinners because they produce criminals, liars and dishonest youths. Therefore, the parents should

be very careful for protecting and developing this wealth in the best possible way.

WEALTH - MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL : This, too, has been gifted by God to be sacrificed for Him. Money as well as the impression and influence a person carries in the Society because of his knowledge, conduct, behaviour and character, etc., must be utilised for benefiting the society and spreading the Kingdom of God in the world.

Spending money for organising conferences, religious congregations, discussions, discourses, workshops, seminars and other things where the listeners and participants are able to develop their knowledge and come closer to God, publishing good magazines and books that help souls in their upliftment, opening charitable dispensaries, hospitals and Homes for elderly destitute persons, giving out scholarships and helping poor children in their education, starting free education centres and doing other benevolent deeds are the best ways to get the blessings of God.

A person carrying a good influence in the society should use it for taking the people on the path of righteousness, to inspire the rich people to work for the society and help the poor as well as the social organisations that are involved in promoting education, righteousness and welfare, to advise common men and women to devote their time more for social works and sacrifice their mental and physical powers for working for God. These persons should behave sweetly and use only sweet words even when they are correcting some wrongs, but the sweetness should not be stretched to flattery. They should act like axis in a wheel. They should be strong in their conviction and should never sacrifice the truth for

pleasing someone. The wheel cannot move if the axis starts moving, too. It is always stable and firm. A person should be selfless wanting nothing from the society or people. He should never care if the people in the organisation criticise him for his frankness and straightforwardness. He should drink the poison of censures from the people and only distribute nectar among them. He should never allow his heart to react against the insinuations from the hating people. Besides, he should develop a flawless character. A flaw in character is like a hole in a boat. However small it is it helps in drowning the boat. Similarly, even a small flaw in a person is enough to destroy his influence in the society. "**Sambhaavitasya Chaakeertih Maranaat Atirichyate**" - when a person with high name and fame becomes notorious, it is worse than death for him.'

Here is a Mantra from Atharvaveda -

"Om, Stutaa Mayaa Varadaa Vedamaataa Prachodayantaam Paavamaanee Dvijaanaam. Aayuh Praanam Prajaam Pashum Keertim Dravinam Brahmavarchasam Mahyam Dattvaa Vrajata Brahmalokam."

God says to His children - "O children! I have given you this kind and generous Mother - the Vedas. She purifies all those who regenerate themselves entering into her womb of Knowledge and become 'Dvijas - twice-borns'. However, the condition is that they should propagate what they learn and inspire others to become Dvijas like them. Once you become Dvija the Mother will give you valuable gifts of longevity, vitality, children, cattle, fame, wealth and spiritual influence over the people. You can enjoy them in your life and have happiness. In case, however, you want to attain Eternal Bliss from Me you will have to sacrifice them one by one for Me." Thus, it is only Daana and sacrifice done for God that takes a soul to Him.

Here is evidence to this effect found in the Kingdom of God - the Universe. The moon collects 15 rays from the sun. in a fortnight time and earns appreciation and praises from the people as a full moon. She however, becomes sad when she observes that the prosperity and fame has driven her away from the sun, her benefactor and Husband. Now, she wants to joint him. The sun, then, induces her to sacrifice all the 15 rays she collected from him back to him one by one. She obeys him and starts sacrificing those rays one by one. On the fifteenth day, that is called "New moon day" she loses all her glamour and becomes zero. She is now happy being with the sun. This day is called "Amaavaasyaa" in Sanskrit that means the day when the sun and moon live together. This natural episode has a big lesson for human beings. The marital life is successful when the couple gives more importance to their love. Instead of sacrificing love for the sake of worldly prosperity the wise couple sacrifices material comforts for the sake of union, because the spouses know that the material prosperity without the mutual love and understanding is a disaster and cannot bring happiness and peace in the household. The couples that do not understand this formula are ignorant and are to pitied.

The word " **Brahmayajna**" includes all the three meanings - i.e. study, introspection and meditation and guides us how we can bring this "Brahmayajna" into practice. We should perform Sandhya daily contemplating over the meanings given here in this book. Besides, we must do efforts to bring the messages of these Mantras in our practical lives. Then only we complete our Poojaa. Without obedience to God and assertions to go closer to Him day by day, the Poojaa, however long it may be done, is useless.

That is why the Rishis have said, "**the prayer must be accompanied by efforts**".

Swaadhyaaya means 'studying scriptures regularly'. When we read good books like the Vedas, Upanishads and Gita, etc., we are in the good company of God as well as the noble souls. Maharshi Patanjali says,

"**Svaadhyaayaat Ishta - Devataa - Samprayogah**" - when a person studies good books he joins himself with a noble soul he likes. For example, when we study the Vedas our soul is in the company of God, the author of the Mantras. When we read Bhagavadgita we are in the company of Shri Krishna whose message is incorporated in the verses. For instance, when we are caught in any dilemma or are under depression and feel weak to encounter the problems let us repeat the words of Shri Krishna "**Yudhyasva Vigatajvarah** - keep fighting without any disappointment or weakness", and we feel as if Shri Krishna has himself come to us and is encouraging us through these words. As per "Shatapatha Brahmana" by regular Swaadhyaaya one achieves the peace of mind. If one wants to have a sound sleep at night he must read some good book before going to bed. Swaadhyaaya has been described by the Rishis as Tapas. That is why the Upanishads frequently tell us not to neglect Swaadhyaaya. It should be enlisted as one the regular items of our daily routine. If one adds Pravachanam (explaining to others what he has studied) his knowledge is more enriched. Swaadhyaaya is the best way to keep oneself physically and mentally healthy, because it does not allow the mind to think of or indulge in filthy ideas that weaken the mind. It is mainly the mind that causes all kinds of illness. If one keeps his mind engaged in positive thoughts he will not have any chance to think of negative ideas.

Swaadhyaaya also means 'introspection (Svasya Adhyayanam - studying one's own self)'. Before performing Sandhyaa in the morning and evening one should sit down and introspect to check himself and see what all mistakes he committed during the day and how many pluses and minuses he collected the day. There is no Chitragupta with God to write the accounts of the deeds done by individuals in the world. We ourselves write our accounts in our mind that works like a computer. Every neurone in the brain is like a chip of the computer. There is no mention of the details of any deed. It is just the result of the deeds that is registered in the form of plus and minus. When we sit in the evening before Sandhyaa to judge ourselves we can easily know how many pulses we have earned on that day. It is the balance of aggregate pluses and minuses at the end of life that decide about the next body for the soul in which he will have to consume the Sanskaras. The plus balance gives him a better birth and the minus one takes it to the lower type of birth where the soul will only enjoy the punishments for the misdeeds without putting up any new Karmas. Actually, such kinds of births are the training schools for the soul where he is practically guided to come up as a good human being in the next human body to be received after the present birth. After performing Sandhyaa we should promise to right ourselves in the future and pray to God for blessing with necessary energy to keep the promise. The meditation performed during Sandhyaa, too, will help us in mending ourselves. He who does like that everyday will surely proceed towards God and move regularly close to Him.

We shall explain the 'Meditation' in detail in the second chapter.

Chapter 2

YOGA AND VEDIC MEDITATION

Nowadays a number of people are teaching meditation. Some say that it is a state of 'emptiness of the mind', others say that it is a state where a person empties himself of all kinds of thoughts. There are a few who declare that 'it does not matter even if one goes to sleep during meditation, he is still meditating'. There are others who assure their students that they need not go through the arduous steps suggested by Maharshi Patanjali but can easily leap to the highest stage of Samaadhi. All these people are more concerned with making fast money. They are not genuinely concerned whether the student actually reaches the stage or not. Once they get money from a student they do not bother. If the student tells them that he has been practising Yoga as per their instructions for the last few years but has not achieved any thing, they will either say that he should continue without bothering for the result, or they will discourage him saying that he is not blessed by God and so it is difficult for him to attain to the highest stage of Yoga and therefore, should be satisfied with whatever he has achieved.

Without criticising these various statements or analysing them further to show their worthlessness let us explain Yoga or meditation on the basis of Maharshi Patanjali. It was he who first of all explained Yoga in detail. He had no selfish motive. Just like other Rishis he, too, was concerned with the welfare of the people and upliftment of souls. All other books available or various methods being introduced now are based on Yogadarshana with a few variations.

First of all let us understand what the meaning of Yoga or meditation is. Here are the Veda Mantras that explain Yoga in a simple way -

"Yunjate Mana Uta Yunjate Dhiyah" -Yaju.

"The wise men, that want to attain to the Bliss and Eternal Peace combine their minds and intellects." When a person studies a book or chants a Mantra what does he do? He does Yoga. In a book or Mantra there are 4 main things - the letters or words, their meaning, the abstract or the substance of those words and the spirit of the author. Letters and words are just the containers of meanings and ideas. They are uttered with tongue and heard with ears. The tongue and ears are the parts of the gross body and they are connected with the gross body of the book - i.e., the words and letters. When the senses are engaged in these words the intellect of the reader, speaker or listener is engaged in catching the meaning of those words while, simultaneously, his mind is busy with grasping the inner substance and his soul is involved in developing contact with the spirit of the author. A person who is reading or listening is unable to fully understand the words if he misses any one of these levels during the process.

Let us explain it in detail. A Mantra is expected to protect a person and save him from calamities. How does it do that, just by reciting without knowing the meaning of it or getting into its spirit? No. We must practice **Mantrayoga**. When our soul is in contact with the author of the Veda Mantras, i.e., God, it extracts power from Him and becomes energetic. That powerful soul brings energy in the mind and intellect that produce good thoughts, and those thoughts save us from all problems. The soul cannot be powerful without being connected with that Supreme Power station. We

have heard about Mantrashakti. Yes, every Mantra has power but for that we must infuse our soul in it. Then only we can obtain Shakti from it. This Shakti we cannot have from the Mantras given by a worldly Guru. The difference between the Great Guru - the God and a worldly Guru is that God is Selfless, Merciful, Omniscient and Pure. The worldly Gurus are mostly selfish, impure and do not have the power the God has and the Mantra given by them is not powerful at all. Therefore, it is always better to connect ourselves only with God if we want to have Shakti from a Mantra and must chant the Mantras taken from the Vedas only. Let us now go to Maharshi Patanjali to learn about Yoga and meditation. Mind is the most valuable part in our body and a powerful spiritual magnetic power given by God to the mankind. It is the Key. In English we have only one word 'mind' while in Sanskrit we have four faculties of it. The faculty of liking, disliking, feeling and memorising is called "**CHITTAM**". The faculty of telling right from wrong is called "**BUDDHI**". That which takes decisions on the basis of the instructions either from Chittam or Buddhi is called "**MANAS**" and lastly the one that implements the decision of Manas is called "**AHAM**". Aham is the executive power of the soul. Let us explain it with an example. Suppose, I have Diabetes and I should not intake sugar. Now, a friend of mine brings some sweets for me. The Chittam will normally go first and contact the object. It remembers the taste of that sweet and so it will say 'I like this sweet and I want to have it.' The soul, then, sends the file to Buddhi and asks its opinion. The Chittam always works with selfishness and does not bother whether or not it is good for the person or his body, and as such is very subjective in recommending a thing to the soul. Buddhi, on the other hand, is selfless, it is like a sincere judge who values justice more than other considerations and so

it is always objective and impartial. It cares for the good of the body and then gives its decision. Now when the file is sent to Buddhi, it knows that the person has diabetes and therefore it is harmful for him to take the sweets. It rejects the recommendation from Chittam and says 'no'. (What a funny thing! The Chittam knows that if the body gets spoiled it will have to be destroyed, too, but it is so covered with the thick veil of selfishness that it is unable to see the outcome of its foolishness. On the other hand the Buddhi is not covered with any selfishness and so it can clearly see that in case the body gets destroyed it will also have no place and so it gives its decision to save the body from any destruction. Is it not the same contrast between the selfish and selfless politicians or leaders?) Now, if the soul is enslaved to Chittam it will like Manas to endorse the opinion of Chittam but not of Buddhi. The Manas knows it and so for formal support it sends the file again to Chittam. It supersedes the opinion of Buddhi and says, 'the master should not worry about the sugar and we may go to the doctor in case something happens to the body. We may take this sweet without any hesitation'. The file then comes to Manas and it endorses the note from Chittam and asks Aham to implement the decision. The Aham then contacts its agencies all over inside the body as well as the endocrine system for making necessary arrangements for taking the sweet in. The nerves and muscles in hands, mouth, tongue and throat start working, the vital forces play their role and the sweet is chewed, liquefied and swallowed. If, however, the soul is the master, it will endorse the note from Buddhi and ask Manas to take action on the decision of Buddhi and then Chittam will be forced to tell its agents - i.e. senses, to withdraw and severe connections with the sweet. The Manas will then, ask Aham to take action accordingly and the physical machinery will start

working. Resultingly the senses will return from the field and stay quiet.

Shri Krishna in Bhagavadgita has beautifully explained this idea as follows:

"Vishayaa Vinivartante Niraahaarasya Dehinah (Gita)" –when the soul does not take any cognisance of the objects that voluntarily offer themselves to be enjoyed, they retire. Normally it is Chittam that initiates physical actions. Maharshi Patanjali realised this working system and said, **"Yogah Chittavritti-Nirodhah"**- hold back the waves rising in your Chittam and you will succeed in your attempts." What is Chittavritti? Every thing in this world has one of the five subtle objects that is called Vishaya. The thing itself is called Vastu. These Vishayas are - **Roopa** - form, **Rasa** - taste, **Gandha** - smell, **Shabda** - sound, **Sparsha** - touch. Roopa is the product of **Agni** -fire, Rasa is the product of **Jalam** - water, Gandha is the product of **Prithvee** - earth, Shabda is the product of **Aakaasha** - ether and Sparsha is the product of **Vaayu** - air. God is a Great Scientist. He has planned each and every thing so perfectly that if something goes wrong with one of those things no scientist in the world can repair or replace it. Here, too, our 5 senses that are Jnaanendriyas or senses of knowledge (informatory senses) have the same five different elements in them. When we say `I see a flower' what does actually happen? The flower is a material and it comes into contact with the material part of the senses (in the present case it is the physical eyes). In eyes we have the subtle power of vision that is the product of Agni. So, when the physical eyes (that are made of the matter and so are material) meet the material form of the object (the flower in the present case) the subtle element of Agni in the eyes come into contact with the

subtle element in the object that, too, is Agni, because Roopam - form is the product of Agni. So, actually in all these sensual perceptions, it is not the contact between the physical sense and material object (two gross things) but the two identical subtle elements that create effects in Chittam. Similarly, when we feel a touch, it is the contact between the Vaayu (air) lying in the material object as well as that in the skin; when we taste something it is the contact between two subtle elements (waters) lying in the material object as well as in the tongue; when we hear it is the two subtle elements of Aakaasha or ether lying in the material object and in ears that come into contact and when we smell it is the contact between the two subtle elements of Prithvee (earth) lying in the material object and the nose that send these signals. So, when Agni in the eyes comes into contact with the Agni in the material object, it creates a wave in Chittam. Chittam has previous records of all sensual informations. When a particular wave starts in Chittam, it opens the previous record that explains to the Chittam whether the information is suitable or not. For suitable informations the Chittam says, "I like it " while for unsuitable ones it says, " I don't like it." These waves are called "**Chittavritti**". We have to control these Vrittis if we do not want to fall prey to the temptations. This process of controlling Vrittis is called Yoga.

Now, the question is how can we control these Vrittis? Maharshi has answered in a good detail. The thing is that if we do not know the root cause of these Vrittis we shall not be able to control them. It is the same thing with medicines, too. Allopathic system of medicines do not cure the root of the diseases, it only gives a momentous relief. Ayurveda and Homeopathy go to the root and there, too, they do not attack the disease but increase the power of the vital forces to

fight with the enemy and drive it out. Thus, while Allopathy weakens the vital forces while driving away the diseases, Homeopathy strengthens them and also does not create any side effects. The fact is that it is due to the weakness of the immune system that a person falls ill and the immune system is weakened due to some root cause. If that root cause is found out the immune system can be set right. According to Homeopathy the mind plays a big role in inviting diseases. This, we know happening in some of the diseases we are familiar with like diabetes, blood pressure, etc. The doctors, now, have been able to realise the importance of the mind and the internal relation between the mind and body, yet they fall short of the Yogic approach. According to Yoga it is the part played by the soul that is responsible for a number of diseases. For example, Allopathic system will stop at malfunction of pancreas due to which the insulin is not produced sufficiently that can easily dissolve the extra sugar in blood and urine. Homeopathy will go further and stop at the causes like tension, etc. that have effected the pancreas. Yoga will go further and ask why is not the patient able to control these tensions and worries that effect the mind and pancreas? The Yoga will find out that his soul is unable to control Chittam because he is ignorant. If he comes to know that when a man is more inclined towards materialism, is ignorant and does not know how to draw power from God he will be a victim of diseases, he will surely mend his way and the style of living and then he will be totally free from all kinds of diseases. See, in Sanskrit we call a healthy man "SVASTHA". What is the literal meaning of this word? "SVA + STHA" a person who is well established in his 'self'. Who is established in his self? The one who is not weak to be pulled by his senses and mind. How can one be strong enough not to allow oneself to be dragged by them?

By controlling "CHITTAVRITTI". How can one control the Chittavritti? By understanding the actual role of the world in one's life, realising the object of life and channelling one's efforts to achieve that object. Let us go for further details.

The first Sootra in Yogadarshana says, **"Atha Yogaanushaasanam"**. What is Yoga? It is a method that enables a person to discipline his each and every part of the body, his own self, the environment in which he is living, and his way of life. Maharshi has explained **"Ashtaanga Yoga"** as the best way for this. We shall explain this in the next chapter. Meanwhile let us go in the depth of Yoga itself.

The root of Yoga is Ayoga. Ayoga means not to attach oneself or to detach oneself. As Bhagavadgita clearly explains -"when the soul is attached with the matter it gets involved in a number of things that take it down. Instead, if it detaches itself from the matter and attaches with the things that are Eternal, it will never have any problems." The attachment and detachment occur simultaneously. For example, when a person enters into water of a river for swimming he gets detached from the bank and joins the water. Similarly, one should develop the habit of attaching himself with God and being devoted to Him, and he will automatically be detached from the world. Instead, if he wants first to detach himself from the world, he may probably not succeed, because detaching oneself needs great power. We know how difficult it becomes for the drug -addicted people to get rid of the bad habit; or for the people who are in the habit of drinking coffee, tea or wine to give up those things. The people know that smoking causes cancer or is bad for health, they even see these warnings on the packets they buy, yet they are unable to give them up. Reason? They say,

we don't have such strong minds. It means that detaching oneself from bad things needs great mental power. The mind should get power from the soul, but if the soul itself is weak how can it then, supply the needed power to the mind? Why does it get weak? Because, it is enslaved to the mind and senses and through them to the material world and its pleasures that are not at all eternal. It is caught in a vicious circle. The best way to break this is to get out of the circle, realise the difference between the eternal and transient things and the value of life and soul. This is what Patanjali first explains to us. He wants to provide us with correct informations and then train us in the method.

Let us look at the picture of Shri Vishnu who is lying on a snake called Shesha. It gives a beautiful message to human beings. There are seven snakes that are protecting Him with their hoods. The snakes are poisonous and can kill a person just by biting him. But here, these very snakes are protecting Him. What do these snakes represent? They represent 5 Jnaanendriyas (senses of information), Chittam and Manas. For a common man all these things are killers and he is unable to free himself from their grips. But a wise person, who has the correct knowledge and knows how to detach himself from the material world, changes them into benefactors. The very Chittam that destroys a person when it is not under the control of a soul, becomes the greatest helper and leads the soul towards eternity when it is controlled by it. Here lies the beauty of Yoga and Paatanjala Yogadarshana. That is why it is called "**Raajayoga**". This is the straight royal path of Yoga. There are no complications in it, no crossroads and no U turns. It is straight and simple but requires great patience and sincerity on the part of the trainee. That is what Patanjali clearly says -

"**Deerghakaala-Neirantarya –Satkaaraasevito – Dridhabhoomih**" - do you want to have a firm ground and foundation for attaining eternity, Peace and Bliss? You will have to practice this Yoga for a long time, without break and irregularity, with all sincerity and a dedicated mind. If you are ready to devote ample time for long with all dedication and sincerity come to me I shall guarantee the Peace and Bliss you want to achieve." What is the way to change Chittam into your friend?

Let me again take you to the picture of Vishnu. He is on "**Ksheerasaagara** - the ocean of milk." What does it mean? It means that if a person wants to develop friendship with the troublesome Chittam so that it helps him rather than putting obstructions on his path, he should rise above Tamas and Rajas and establish himself in Sattwam. Sattwam is white, while Rajas is red, Tamas is dark and the one free from all these three Gunas is blue. That is why Shri Rama, Krishna, Vishnu and Shiva all are said to be blue in colour. Another thing in the picture is that Vishnu here is shown as Laķsmeepati - the master of wealth. Lakshmee – the goddess of wealth - is sitting at His feet and attending to Him. It means that if a person wants to develop friendship with Chittam he should be able to control it. The Chittam that controls the soul does not love it. Chittam loves a soul that is brave and is never enslaved to it. It is just like a lady. Though the ladies show that they want a husband who obeys them, but actually they never love a person who is henpecked and stands and waits for her orders. They do not want weak-kneed and spineless persons but those who can govern them, to be their husbands. It is very difficult to understand a lady. Similarly, it is difficult to understand Chittam, too. The fact is that Chittam wants and loves a strong soul that can say

"NO" when anything does not suit it. When the soul follows Chittam or mind it stays either in Tamas or Rajas, but when it controls it, it is established in Sattwam. When it rises above the mind and becomes **Kevalee** (totally detached from mind), it rises above all the three Gunas and stays as **Gunaateeta** or **Nirguna**, That is the best state of soul. It is this superior state of the soul that reflects as the blue aura.

Chittam possesses all the three Gunas. When it becomes the master and free from the control of the soul, it loses Sattwam and deals with senses either with Tamas or Rajas. With Chittam as their master the senses, too, play with these two colours only. When the base in Chittam is Tamas the waves that rise in it due to the contact with the objects appear in dark colour. If the base is Rajas the waves appear in red colour. The waves in Chittam are like the waves rising in ocean. In a fountain if you have red coloured bulbs you see the fountain water appearing red, with the blue bulb they appear to be blue. The water itself has no colour. It is the colour of the bulbs that reflects in it and the water itself seems to possess that colour. Here, too, it is the base of Chittam that is significant. The base is built of emotions like lethargy, indifference, carelessness, ignorance, etc. or those like anger, hatred, greed, sensuousness, jealousy, ego, etc. The former ones belong to the category of Tamas while the latter belong to the category of Rajas. When the waves rise in Chittam with Tamas as base they are Taamasika Vrittis, when they rise with a Rajas base they are Raajasika Vrittis, when they do not have any of these bases they have only one base and that is of peace and happiness. The waves rising with this base are called Saattwika Vrittis.

There are 5 kinds of Chittam - **Moodha, Kshipta, Vikshipta, Ekaagra and Niruddha.** When Chittam is covered with Tamas it becomes totally inactive and does not recognise or realise anything. This state of Chittam is called **Moodha**. When it is with Rajas, it is extremely active and does not get stabilised, a person with this kind of Chittam is called fickle-minded, confused and unstable. Such a person cannot concentrate his mind even for a second. He has numberless ideas and thoughts crossing one another and is unable to take any final decision. Such a person is called **Kshipta**. The third kind of Chittam is **Vikshipta**. This state of mind develops with the combination of Rajas and Sattwa. A person with this kind of Chittam is confused and upset at one time but very intelligent and stabilised at another. The reason is that when Rajas overpowers Sattwa he is unstable and confused, and when Sattwa overpowers Rajas he is stabilised and is able to understand the things in proper perspective. Then, he is able to take correct decisions. Fourth state of Chittam is called **Ekaagra**. At this stage the Chittam is filled with only Sattwa and concentrates easily on any thing a person desires. Ekaagra means the Chittam that is completely concentrated on one point. Such a person is never confused. He is never double-minded and takes all decisions with great care and with a peaceful mind. His mind is full of light and he sees everything in a proper perspective. He can easily discriminate right from wrong. The last kind of Chittam is **Niruddha**. Here, at this stage Chittam is freed from all kinds of these three Gunas and is **Nirguna**. The Chittam of this kind is with the soul and God and is well established, very peaceful and clairvoyant.

The soul itself is free from all these three Gunas, but when it accompanies Chittam possessing Gunas

it is also effected by them and acts like the Chittam does. Once it rises above Chittam, or frees Chittam from the three Gunas by taking it under its full control, it becomes Niruddha. At this stage the soul is full of peace, completely stabilised and unperturbed, still like Maanasarovara Lake with clear understanding. It is so clairvoyant that it can see itself. It can remember all the previous births he has come through. He can read Sanskaras in itself. The soul is established in its own self. The pains and pleasures trouble the soul until it is in company of Chittam bound in three Gunas. Once the Chittam is freed from that bondage or the soul is able to detach itself from Chittam it is established in its own self. That is what Maharshi says, "**Tadaa Drashtuh Svaroope Avasthaanam** – then the soul establishes itself in its own form or becomes one with God." This is the 3 rd Sootra in the first Chapter. It has two meanings - when the soul attains to the state of Niruddha (that is when it succeeds in freeing Chittam from all Vrittis and accomplishes Chitta-Vritti-Nirodha) the soul establishes itself in its own self (Svaroope) or is established in the **Self** of God (**Drashtuh Svaroope**) the Great Supervisor.

The involvement of the soul that is pure and stabilised, in these Chittavrittis can be illustrated like this - suppose we go to a lake at night. The water in the lake is very clean and we can see the moon reflected in it. Suddenly we feel the wind blowing and that creates some riffles in water. The calmness of water is now disturbed and also the moon in water has become shaky. Is the real moon shaky? No. She is in the sky and shining with great peace and calmness. It is shaky in the lake because it is involved with the water of the lake that has been disturbed by the wind. Similarly, the soul, by its nature, is never perturbed, it is calm and quiet like moon in the sky. Only when it gets involved with Chittam it gets perturbed, and that, too, when it has different kinds

of Vrittis rising in it due to the contacts of outward worldly objects that act like wind. Now, you have the best way for keeping yourself away from worldly tensions. Do not let the objects raise Vrittis in your Chittam. How can you do that? Either by keeping yourself away from the objects (for example, not watching the movies that would agitate your mind; or keeping away the person who creates disturbances in your mind) or by strengthening Chittam so that even if it comes into contact of the worldly objects it does not allow them to raise any waves in it. That is possible by detaching your Chittam from the senses that are in contact with the objects, or by keeping Chittam under the control of the self that is very strong because it stays with and in God for ever. All these three steps can be taken easily if you have learnt Yoga well.

There are two kinds of Vrittis - **Klishta** and **Aklishta.** Klishta are the Vrittis that create anger, jealousy, greed, ego, etc. and thus become troublesome. Aklishta are the Vrittis that, instead of creating these bad emotions, destroy them in Chittam and make it peaceful. The Klishta Vrittis have the base of Tamas mixed with Rajas while the Aklishta Vrittis have the base of pure Sattwa. Klishta Vrittis are caused by 5 things - **Avidyaa, Asmitaa, Raaga, Dvesha** and **Abhinivesha**. Let us examine these 5 basic causes of our mental disturbances and try to understand them clearly so that we may be able to find out their correct remedies to keep ourselves, physically, mentally and spiritually healthy.

1. AVIDYAA - Anitya – Ashuchi – Duhkha – Anaatmasu Nitya – Shuchi – Sukha – Aatmakhyaatih - Avidyaa." - Y.D. 1.25.

A. Inability to tell Uneternal from Eternal: There are two kinds of things in the world - eternal and transitory. That which is destructible, or does not go

with the eternal soul is called "**Anitya**." We know that the body is Anitya because it must be destroyed and burnt in the end. In comparison to the body, the soul is Nitya or eternal, because even after the body is destroyed it has its existence. We do not know where it exists after it leaves the body but it is sure that it is never destroyed. "**Na Jaayate Mriyate Vaa Kadaachit** (Gita) - it is neither born nor destroyed.)." Janma means the coming of the soul in a body and Mrityu means separation of the soul from the body. When it leaves the body we say that "the person is dead" and when it comes in the world with a body that it enters at the time of conception, we say, "the person is born". So, it is the person (the combination of the body and soul) that is born not the soul. It clearly proves that it is the soul that is eternal and not the body. Now, let us see how we deal in the world. If we go into the depth and see to ourselves we shall find that all our dealings are concerned mostly with the body. We eat, drink, play, sleep, and enjoy and earn money for all these things. For what? For the soul? No, for the body. We are prepared to put the soul into trouble for the pleasure of the body. For spiritual upliftment we must go through austerity that goes against the comforts of the body. As we are more concerned with the body, we say "leave all this austerity, fasting, going to Satsang, rising early in the morning and doing prayer to God, etc., it gives pain to the body. Let us give more rest to the body so it gives us pleasure." We are thus covered with "**Avidyaa**" - misunderstanding that provokes us to give more importance to the body than to the soul. That is why we are sick. The more you give facilities to the body for its convenience, the more you will fall sick. Through diseases we develop mental and physical weaknesses that, ultimately, bring us all kinds of pains and sufferings. So, Avidyaa, that

misguides us to give more importance to that which is transient is the first cause of our Klesha (pains and sufferings). Similarly, we are indulged in so many bad habits like drinking, meat-eating, smoking, drugging, etc., that are all concerned with giving pleasure to the body that is not eternal. We are indulged more in spinning money even through fraudulent ways. These corruptions, murders, quarrels are all motivated by money, though we know that the wealth will remain here only when we have to leave the body. We do not listen to God or soul that are Eternal.

B. Inability to tell impure from pure: We misunderstand impure things as pure. What is impure? The one that spoils the purity of body, soul or mind. The people drink wine. Is it pure? No. It spoils millions of cells in our brain and weakens it, it destroys the pure blood and tissues in the body. The people eat meat, is it pure? No. We have witnessed the "mad cow" episode. Who knows how many impurities are there in the animal of which the people eat meat. They know only when they are laid up with incurable diseases that push them towards death. The people used pesticides for keeping the vegetables pure. Were they right in doing so? No, because now they are discarding it. Also, now the people are coming to the new understanding that "chemicals used as fertilisers are dangerous for human beings" and are stressing the need of using only riskless domestic manure like cow-dung, etc. The water, air and other things we are using now are all polluted. But we do not care for them. Are we wise enough to tell pure things from impure? The soul is pure when it is not indulged in the worldly affairs with Chittam and senses. Are we caring for it? Are we not forcing our souls to go with senses that are impure? And there is the pollution of thoughts which has created a lot of troubles and calamities in the

world. So, this is the second main cause of our troubles - Klesha.

C. Inability to tell 'Duhkha' from 'Sukha': Do we really know what causes pains and what give us pleasure? Possibly, no. We know that sex gives us pleasure, but we do not know that it is the one that brings us all kinds of sufferings, too. We think that disciplining children in young age is very troublesome for them and so we should let them free to enjoy the life as they like. Is it a right decision? Are we not, thus, putting them on the path that would bring them more sufferings in the future? Are we really leading them towards Sukha? We are in the habit of acquiring more comfortable things like softer beds, sofa sets, etc. Are we really giving pleasure and comforts to the bodies? Are we not frequently warned by doctors to lie down on harder beds when we fall ill and develop spinal disorders? We are used to take stale things (though kept in refrigerator) just for making us comfortable by not forcing ourselves to cook fresh food every time. Are we really doing a good thing? Is it not the cause of a number of diseases? We take it to be more pleasing to take out and drink the coldest bottle of soft drinks when we return from the scorching sun outside. Are we really helping our body in getting pleasure? Do we not become victims of incurable arthritis? Perhaps we are more concerned with the present rather than the future. We take pleasure in drinking tea and coffee frequently during the day's work. Are we not buying liver disturbances and troubles by taking in toxin and caffeine? We feel to have much pleasure in chain smoking. Are we not driving our brains and bodies towards cancer and other diseases that will bring us enormous pains and troubles? Are not all these things of pleasures actually the causes of troubles? Do we not fall in the third category of misunderstanding?

D. Mistaking the material things for soul: Soul is sentient while body is insentient. When a person deals with insentient things as if they are all sentient he is working under Avidyaa. Normally, all our dealings are centred round the body. Actually, we never take the body to be insentient. We do not remember that there is a power inside the body that is making the body sentient. We give more honour and importance to the body than to the soul. Similarly, we give more importance to the world while the truth is that the world is insentient and the Power that makes it active is God. It can be compared to a situation where the people give more importance to the assistant than to his boss who is actually running the office. Once we realise that it is the soul that is running this body as it is God Who is running the world we shall be giving more importance to the soul and God and that will remove all our problems. That is what the first Mantra of Eashopanishad as well as the 40th chapter of Yajurveda implies. Our intention to keep the body satisfied with all kinds of drinks and eatables, to keep it decorated with nice dresses and ornaments, to prefer body to the soul in all dealings are all based on this misconception. Similarly, when a person does not fear to tell a lie or to rob others for his own comforts, or when he thinks that he should enjoy the world to his best even if that action harms a lot of persons he is working under the influence of Avidyaa. Such a person does not seem to fear the punishments to be faced in the next births, because, probably, he does not believe either in God, the Great Impartial Judge, or in the existence of rebirths themselves.

2. ASMITAA: - As explained earlier, a person is made of three different things - body, mind and soul. The body is the instrument while the soul is the master. The soul is called "I". When any part of the body pains

the person says, " I am suffering from pain". When a part of the body is injured he says, "I am injured". When the body desires for some food or drink the person says, "I am hungry or thirsty." When the body is attacked by fever or flu the person says, "I am sick". When someone's Chittam is hurt by anyone's harsh and insulting words he says, "I am very much hurt." Thus, we may see that the things that are mainly concerned with the body or mind are ignorantly related to the soul, though it is not the soul that has the pain, is injured, feels hunger or thirst, falls ill or gets hurt. The soul is not at all effected by these things. It, however, feels like that because it is attached with the body, mind and senses. This is called "**Asmitaa**" - to mistake the body or mind for being "I" when actually they are not.

This is what Gita means when it talks of "Svadharma" and "Paradharma" - "**Shreyaan Svadharmo Vigunah Paradharmaat Svanushthitaat. Svadharme Nidhanam Shreyah Paradharmo Bhayaavahah.**" Svadharma means the duties concerned with "**Sva**" -the soul, while Paradharma means the duties connected with "**para**" - the body. Similarly, when a man is going to die he says, "I am dying" while the fact is that it is the body and not the soul that is dying. This misconception originates from "Avidyaa". A person is relieved from a number of problems once he realises this reality.

Yoga takes a person beyond the body, senses and mind and then the soul is established in itself where it is able to discriminate between the soul and body and the things concerned with body do not give him any trouble. That is why the real Yogis never suffer even if they do not get anything for eating and drinking for a long time. They do not bother if they have to sleep on a hard or a soft bed. They do not feel if some

one abuses or insults them. Yoga trains a person in acquiring this unique status that makes him "balanced" in all situations. Gita says, " A person who is able to attain this state acquires equilibrium and stays calm and quiet even in adverse situations. Then, he is actually in Brahman, because Brahman, too, is balanced and unaffected in any situation." Though Brahman or God exists in the things of the world, but the disturbances effecting those things do not disturb Him, because though living in them He is not linked with them. Just like soul God, too, lives in everyone's body, but He unlike soul is not disturbed when something happens to the body or mind. Reason? The soul is connected with mind and body when Brahman is not. Mind is the main link that joins the soul with the body and senses. So anything that happens to the body or mind effects the soul, too, while on the other hand Brahman does not have any mind and so he is completely aloof from the body and mind of a person. That is what Maharshi says -

"Klesha – karmavipaaka – Aashayeih – Aparaamrishtah – Purushavisheshah - Eashvarah. Y.D. 1. 24.

The Brahman is free from all these Kleshas that have been explained earlier. He does Karma but those Karmas do not bind him because He does all those Karmas without desiring for their fruits and so, they do not produce any Sanskaras that could bind Him. If a person wants to do Karmas without being bound by them he should become like God (one can imbibe the qualities of God but he cannot become God, just as a son can imbibe the qualities of his father, but they do not make him the "father"). The way to become like God and not to be bound by the Karmas that put a soul in the chains of birth and death is called "**Karmayoga**" in Gita.

3. RAAGA: The third Klesha is "Raaga". Raaga means the emotion that causes the soul to be attracted towards a thing that has given pleasure to Chittam. This is the faculty of "liking" in the mind.

4. DVESHA: Dvesha is just opposite to Raaga. This emotion causes the soul to run away from a thing that has given displeasure to Chittam. This is the faculty of disliking.

5. ABHINIVESHA: This is the fifth Klesha. It means "fearing death". Every creature in this world fears death and therefore, tries to save itself from it. All these attacks, robberies, atrocities are successful only because the other party does not want to die. When the robbers come to a person and with guns in their hands ask him to give out whatever he possesses, the victim submits himself and allows them to take away whatever they want and can, just because he does not want to be killed by them. A desire to survive or live long is at the root of this fear. If a person becomes able to understand that he will not die until God wants him to, or he won't survive a minute later than the destiny wants, he will never fear death. That is why, all these martyrs face the death with all pleasure and without any fear. They are pleased to die because they know that the death will give them a new life and may be the better one.

These are 5 Kleshas that are usually the base when the waves in Chittam rise and therefore, all those waves are coloured either with Tamas or Rajas. When these Kleshas are not there the waves do not have any colour, they are colourless and that state of Chittam is called Sattwa. When these 5 Kleshas become the base of Vrittis they give lot of troubles and so they are Klishta Vrittis. When they are absent the Vrittis are all Saattwika and they promote the soul and help it in

moving on the path of Peace and Bliss, so, they are called Aklishta. The best way to change these Klishta Vrittis into Aklishta ones is to practice Buddhiyoga.

BUDDHIYOGA - Buddhiyoga is the formula of Gita. Normally it is Chittam that leads other parts of mind during an action. Whenever there is an object to be contacted, Chittam is so impertinent that it runs before others and says, "don't bother I shall get it" (just like the children do when a phone rings at home). It carries all senses together along with Kleshas as its troops and creates a mess. These Kleshas create a base of Tamas and Rajas and Chittam and senses look at the objects with that coloured vision only. This is called subjective approach. The Chittam in this situation does not inform the soul correctly about the object. It gives the information its own colour and sends signals to the soul in its own version (just as the followers of Jesus Christ, the members of the earlier Christian Community or the evangelists presented a number of statements in their own versions and put them in the Bible as the words uttered by Jesus to establish their authenticity. We appreciate, however, the honesty of Christian scholars, the members of 'JESUS SEMINAR' who bravely encountered this situation and declared in their book named ' 5 Gospels' that 80 per cent of the statements said to be uttered by Jesus in the Bible do not belong to him). If it likes the object, however bad it may be, it says, "let us welcome it. It is very useful for us." If it dislikes it, however good it may be, it says,"don't go to it, it will harm us." That is how all the dealings in the world are going on these days. The contracts, even if they are costlier than other proposals, are recommended by the concerned authorities because the party has already greased their palms with a good lot of money that has satisfied their greed and Raaga has become the base of the Vrittis of their

Chittam. The Chittam coloured with Raaga sends favourable signals to the soul. How can, then, those souls be unbiased? Their recommendations are all subjective ones. They are not concerned whether the work will be completed on time or properly or not. The Chittam is playing a role of a monster these days in the world (mainly in the developing countries), that is why, though full of efficient scientists and capable citizens, they are not making any progress at all.

If, however, the soul asserts its authority and asks Chittam to stay back while ordering the Buddhi to deal with the object present, Chittam readily obeys the soul. Now, Buddhi that is not coloured in Tamas or Rajas gives the senses a clear vision. The senses go forward under the command of Buddhi, evaluate the object not subjectively but objectively and send correct and untainted signals to the soul. If in the meantime, Chittam expresses his mute resentment to the decision of Buddhi, the soul, that knows well the bad habits of Chittam, admonishes it and warns it to keep quiet or (if it insists on sharing the pleasure) orders it to follow Buddhi in all respects. Chittam now follows the tough instructions of the soul and starts taking pleasure in the decisions of Buddhi. Everything goes on well.

Shri Krishna has explained this formula in a beautiful way. He says," Control Jnaanendriyas by placing Buddhi as their commander-in-chief and then, let the Karmendriyas work freely. The work will be accomplished without any mess or disturbance. These are the Jnaanendriyas working under Chittam that block the way of Karmendriyas. Let us take an example. Suppose the Government announces a prize for the best book on religion and appoints a committee of 3 persons for evaluation of the books sent for the contest. Now, if a writer is rich and knows that if his

book is awarded prize, though useless for the public, it will hit the market, and he will become still richer and pocket the whole of the coveted money, he will try to find out the names of the members of the evaluation committee. He will go to the concerned department in the Government, catch hold of the concerned person, and bribe him. His Chittam so satisfied, the man in turn, without caring for the repercussions, will vomit the names of the members of the committee. The writer will then, approach the committee members individually and captivate their Chittams by pleasing them through bribes. Now, the Chittams of these committee members will set aside Buddhi and decide subjectively. As their senses and Chittam are already coloured in the colour of Rajas, their decision also will be coloured one. Without even going through the books submitted for impartial evaluation, they (actually, the money bribed to them has already decided) will decide that the book (written by the person who filled the mouth of their Chittam with money) is the best and will benefit the people of the country. Their Buddhi admonishes them for their harmful decision but their Chittam asks it to "shut up" and mind its own business. These are the very words the committee members utter when some honest person with Buddhi comes to them and protests against their dishonest decision.

According to Shri Krishna, he who wants not to be bound with Karmas should practice Buddhiyoga and command his Buddhi to lead senses whenever an object is to be contacted. The senses go and contact them without any coloured vision and send correct informations about the object. Buddhi, being always honest, evaluates those informations and sees whether or not they are beneficial to the soul. It is not concerned as much with the pleasure of Chittam as with the good

of the soul. In case, the Chittam communicates its displeasure to the soul, it chides it and asks it to feel pleasure in the decision taken by Buddhi. That is how the people, who are reluctant earlier (because of their Chittam playing havoc) to attend a religious class or to go to Satsang, eventually start taking pleasure in them and become religious persons.

Maharshi Patanjali explains the same thing in the following Sootra -

Abhyaasa-Veiraagyaabhyaam Tannirodhah. – Y.D. 1.12.

" The Vrittis of Chittam are modified with Abhyaasa and Veiraagya." Nirodha, actually, is modification or rechannelling. Maharshi as well as Shri Krishna do not agree with "**Damanam**" - suppressing the emotions. For them the best way is "**Shamanam**" rechannelization and modification. Suppose, you have a very mischievous child. He makes mischief because he is naturally very active and does not have any outlet for that extra forceful activeness. In fact, this kind of activeness is very useful in life if it is channelized properly. If the activeness of the child that is expressed mostly through Karmendriyas is channelized through Jnaanendriyas controlled by Buddhi, certainly, he will become the wisest man in the world. Let us have an example. Suppose there is a river that brings floods every year and destroys the crops, human beings and cattle of the surrounding villages. The best way to prevent these floods is to rechannelise the stream, build a dam over the river, and create a reservoir the water of which can be used for generating electricity. The main stream may, however, be diverted to continue its journey further. Thus, not only we save the villages from the havoc created every year by the river, we shall also benefit the village by generating electricity. Similarly, we can rechannelise the senses for our

benefit. The Klishta Vrittis of Chittam may be changed into Aklishta ones. How? Here is the way. Make the soul subservient to God (Vidheyaatmaa). The soul will receive energy and guidance from God. Now, let the soul instruct Chittam to follow Buddhi. The Chittam, now, working under the orders of Buddhi will go with senses only when the Buddhi tells it to do so. Under this system the senses will contact only those objects that will benefit Buddhi and soul, otherwise they will stay detached and indifferent. The flow of all these rivers (senses) will thus be contained that will create a reservoir and will produce energy for the soul. Under the control of soul and Buddhi the senses and Chittam will act sensibly. This process of contacting objects should be developed in children from the very childhood so that whenever they want to make friends they are not just carried away by emotions but are guided by clear unbiased judgements taken by Buddhi as to whether the person with whom they want to develop friendship is right or wrong. Once they develop this habit of making correct judgements they will never be misled by emotions and will, never create problems for families.

Maharshi says that the way to control these senses is twofold - "**Abhyaasa**" and "**Veiraagya**". First create Veiraagya in Chittam. There are two meanings of Veiraagya - 1.detaching the senses from the worldly objects, and 2. creating special attachment with soul. Usually the streams of the senses flow out - " **Paraanchi Khaani Vyatrinat Svayambhooh Tasmaat Paraank Pashyati Naantaraatman - Upanishad.**" One should hold their flow with the help of Chittam controlled by Buddhi. Once they do not go out to contact the objects, the objects will automatically go away just as an unwelcomed guest turns away when nobody responds to his knocks at the door. "**Vishayaa Vinivartante**

Niraaharasya Dehinah" - **Gita** -`when the soul is averse to take food from the objects and resolves to keep itself without food and asks Chittam and senses not to disturb him with the informations brought from outside, the senses are detached and stay indifferent. When the objects see that there is no one to say even `Hello' to them they turn away.' Now, drive these senses and Chittam towards soul and `God' (Abhi+Aasa = Abhyaasa - to put them on the way that takes them towards God). Abhayaasa also means `to practice'. This Veiraagya is achieved through frequent practice. In a common man the channel of senses and Chittam is mostly flowing outward. It can be rechannelled with the help of studying good books or attending to Satsangs. That is why, the scriptures say that the parents should take the children to Satsangs from their very childhood. Without their knowledge, this practice will rechannelise their senses and Chittam and then it will be easier for them to mould the minds of their children as they like. The main cause of the present problems with teenagers is that the parents do not care for these small things from their childhood, they allow them to stay at home playing and enjoying while they go to Satsangs alone. The Christians and Muslims are very careful about it and that is why we see a number of young men and women in their congregations. The Hindus should stop this liberal attitude towards their children if they want to see them leading a happy righteous life even when they are away from them.

The God says, "**Ahamannam – Ahamannam - Ahamannam"** - `I am the food for a soul. It can take me in and energise itself. Instead, if it prefers the food of the worldly enjoyments and passions, he becomes my food and then I become Annaada ("**Ahamannaado – Ahamannaado - Ahamannaadah.**"). and eat him out.'

Now, it is for the soul to see what it wants to become. If a person wants to energise himself spiritually, he should try to eat the Best Spiritual Food (Brahman) with the help of Abhyaasa and Veiraagya.

Maharshi Patanjali has explained "**Abhyaasa**" as follows -

"Tatra Sthitou Yatnah Abhyaasah." Y.D.1.13.

There are a number of steps to reach the highest peak of Samaadhi (Meditation). (Meditation is not a thing that can be reached just by one jump as some people think. They have mistaken Dhyaanam for Meditation, merely a way of concentration.) First go over the first step. Try to stabilise yourself at that step and then proceed to the next one. This is called Abhyaasa.' Here are the steps -

1. Yama - Ahinsaa, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacharya, Aparigraha.

2. Niyama- Shoucha, Santosha, Tapah, Swaadhyaaya, Eashvarapranidhaana.

3. Aasana. 4. Praanaayaama. 5. Pratyaahaara. 6. Dhaaranaa, 7. Dhyaana. 8. Samaadhi.

All these 8 steps are called "**Ashtaanga Yoga**". We shall explain these 8 steps in the next chapter. What we want to stress here is that a person who wants to reach the highest state of Samaadhi must go through each step (Yama and Niyama consist of 10 steps, so actually they are 16 steps). Practising for stabilisation at each of these 16 steps is called Abhyaasa.' An aspirant should proceed to the next step only when he has accomplished the previous one.

How much time will it take? How long we should do practice? These are the common questions that the

people ask before they make up their minds for Yoga. There are also a few who ask how many times we should chant this Mantra or how much time should we devote for this chant? The answer is that when a person is careful more about 'how much time' or 'how many times' he cannot concentrate on the Mantra or its meaning, as he will be looking at the clock's hands or will be counting the numbers. While chanting a Mantra one should not have anything else on his mind. Therefore, we should concentrate mainly on the Mantra and chant it as long as we wish or are not exhausted. See, what Maharshi says,

"Deerghakaala – Neirantarya – Satkaara – Aasevitah Dridhabhoomih." Y.D. 1.14.

One must erect the building of Yoga on a strong foundation. This strong foundation is laid down by practising for a long period (Deerghakaala), without any break or irregularity (Neirantarya), with all faith, sincerity, devotion, spirit, enthusiasm and patience (Satkaara) and performing all these Yogic practices according to the set formula and procedure (Aasevitah). If one does not follow the above conditions and does Yogic practices in a haphazard manner or depends more upon convenience and feasibility he is just wasting his precious time.

Once a person reaches the stage of Dhaaranaa (after having accomplished all the previous steps successfully) he is taken care of by God Himself and shown the way to accomplish Dhyaanam. Once Dhyaanam is accomplished it becomes easy for him to concentrate on the self and then to meditate on God. Meditating on God is in two phases - "Savikalpa" - when a person feels like "I see You, or I am in You" and "Nirvikalpa" - when the meditator becomes one with God. Here, the "**I**" is totally dissolved in "**YOU**",

"seeing", "feeling" or discrimination of identities does not exist, the self is merged in the SELF and there is nothing but silence, peace and Bliss. This is in short the way to reach the state of "Oneness" with God, to be in Union with God. "**HE**" - the unseen Supreme Being (addressed in third person) changes into "**YOU**" - in second person, because HE is no more Invisible but is before him. Then, lastly "**Sah**" - HE changes into "**AHAM**" - I when he starts saying "**SOHAM**" or "**SHIVOHAM**" - I am **HE**, I am **SHIVA** (the Blissful).

Chapter 3

ASHTAANGA YOGA

Maharshi Dayanand has arranged the Mantras of Vedic Sandhyaa in such a way that they take a devotee every day through all the eight steps of Ashtaanga Yoga and remind him of the significance of Yoga. As explained earlier Maharshi Patanjali has explained Ashtaanga Yoga in Yogadarshana and has said,

"**Yogaanga - Anushthaanat - Ashuddhikshaye Jnaanadeeptih Aaviveka-Khyaateh** -when a person practices all these 8 Angas of Yoga he gets cleansed from within and his burning fire of knowledge is intensified until he is able to realize his own self and God."

We have discussed briefly about meditation in the previous chapter. The people now have mistaken Dhaaranaa or Dhyaanam for meditation. They tell us to completely empty our minds of all kinds of thoughts. Here they are wrong. No one can empty his mind of all kinds of thoughts because thoughts are the property of Buddhi that is a part of mind and the Buddhi can never be deprived of its property. Well, the thoughts, however, can be rechannelised and brought under the control of soul and the Buddhi can concentrate its thoughts either on the soul (the self) or on God. It can be done only through assertions. If the soul or Buddhi does not assert the flow of thoughts will be naturally towards the worldly objects. Once the thoughts are concentrated on the worldly objects the Buddhi has informations about the worldly things but not about the self or God. That is why Maharshi has explained Dhyaanam as "DHYAANAM NIRVISHAYAM MANAH - Dhyaanam occurs when the mind is emptied of all thoughts concerning the worldly objects". It means

that when Chittam calls all its senses to come back without welcoming the objects, the objects go away and then, these Vrittis turn around towards soul. In the Sootra the word "Vishaya" stands for worldly objects. Once the person becomes introvert all his senses, Buddhi and Manas energize the soul to realize the self. The realization of the self is called "Vivekakhyaati" or "Purushakhyaati". Khyaati" means discovering. The soul discovers itself. The word "discovering" means that if the soul does not assert it remains "covered". Yes, there is no doubt. As explained by Shri Krishna -

"Ajnaanenaavritam Jnaanam Tena Muhyanti Jantavah"

"The knowledge of the soul is covered with Ajnaana of Manas that is why the common men become confused." What happens with common men is that the Buddhi follows Chittam that follows the senses and the senses contact the worldly objects with the colors of Rajas and Tamas. The Vrittis that rise in Chittam filled with these colors cannot bring any good informations to the soul. All such informations are the offshoots of Ajnaana or ignorance and so, the soul's knowledge is covered with this Ajnaana. The only way to tear off this cover of Ajnaana is intensifying the flame of knowledge in Buddhi. That happens only when the soul realizes itself and does not allow the Chittam or senses to overpower it. Achieving this state of soul is called "Vivekakhyaati" - manifestation of discriminating power." Just like a foolish and lethargic boss who relies on the opinions of his assistants more than his own, loses his power of discrimination and consequently is caught in a number of problems, even so, when the soul becomes indifferent and sells itself in the hands of Chittam it loses its Viveka and becomes blind. It however, regains it and discovers its own

powers when it detaches itself from the hold of Chittam and senses and rises above them. When it becomes totally detached, it stays in the self. For attaining this state of "Self-establishment" the soul should go through these 8 Angas of Yoga.

A person who wants to establish himself in the self must go through the procedure of cleansing oneself. First of all he should cleanse his physical aspects, then he should try to cleanse his mental and spiritual things. The body is the best instrument given by God for attaining mental and spiritual development. If a person is not physically fit,he cannot move on the spiritual path. "**Dharmaartha – Kaama – Mokshaanaam Aarogyam Moolam Uttamam**- health is the best foundation of Dharma, Artha, Kaama and Moksha." A person who does not keep good health cannot observe Dharma, then, how can he go towards Moksha - emancipation? One of the meanings of Yajna is to do "Devapoojaa". What is the meaning of "Devapoojaa"? Any thing or person that helps us selflessly in our life and is used by us is Deva. It is our duty to keep that thing or person intact. This is called Devapoojaa or Yajna. Our body, too, is like that. We use our bodies in a number of ways and without its help we are unable to do anything. Each and every part, nerve, muscle, gland and vein does its work in cooperation and tries its best to see that the eternal Yajna going on in the body is never disturbed. We must not only be grateful to the body but should also see that all those parts, etc. are kept well. Once the body is kept healthy we should think of cleansing our minds. Here is the detailed explanation of this Ashtaanga Yoga.

There are 5 Yamas and 5 Niyamas on which the next 6 Angas or parts are based. Manu says,

"Yamaan Seveta Satatam Na Niyamaan Kevalaan Budhah. Yamaan Patayakurvaano Niyamaan Kevalaan Bhajan."

"A person should regularly observe these Yamas. He should not be satisfied with observing only Niyamas. He who observes only Niyamas and does not care for Yamas fails in his life and deteriorates."

What is the difference between Yamas and Niyamas? Why are the Yamas so significant? The Niyamas are simple and easy to be observed. They give strength to a person to follow Yamas. The Yamas are more significant because they cleanse our minds. They are difficult to be observed but, it is they that strengthen the mind, help the soul in rising above the three Gunas, mind and senses. They produce energy for the soul. Niyamas clear the path for observing Yamas. Therefore, if a person observes only Niyamas, clears the path but does not move on it what is the use of observing Niyamas? This also confirms that those who say that it is not necessary to follow Patanjali and one can jump straight to the state of meditation without going through the lengthy procedure of following Yamas and Niyamas, etc., are totally wrong.

Here are the 5 Yamas-

1. **Ahinsaa** - means non-violence that includes avoiding the following: - killing animals or birds, encouraging others for killing them by purchasing meat, etc., instigating a person to kill someone; harming; hurting someone by words, action or even by thoughts; giving more importance to oneself than to others, thinking others to be inferior to himself; practicing double standards in dealings; discriminating on the basis of caste, creed, color or country; and chiding, scolding, blaming, cursing, criticizing

unnecessarily in a fit of anger or arrogance. According to the Vedas, even while correcting someone we must never use harsh words but convince him in a sweet way. Hinsaa or violence is the product of Eershyaa (jealousy), Dvesha (hatred and enmity), Krodha (anger) or Ahankaara (ego). Once a person practices Ahinsaa sincerely he washes away all these bad things from his mind and becomes mentally pure. **The purity is the strength of mind**. It is the purity of thoughts that makes a person strong-minded. This purity brings such energy in a person that all his desires are fulfilled (because those desires are not the product of any bad emotions). His influence on others is marvelous. The pure mind transmits strong waves that reach other's mind and activates it. Such a person is loved by all because he does not nourish any selfishness. This is the best way to develop friendship with God Who Himself is ever Pure. HE comes and lives in such a person and is always available to him in all critical situations. Whenever the person is in dilemma HE talks to him and He guides him on the right path. The person is able to catch the signals coming from HIM because his mind is pure. (The author himself has experienced these marvels in his life. When I was in South Africa recently I went over various parts of the beautiful country and delivered sermons in more than 150 Satsangs including 'cottage-sittings'. The people escorting me would ask me 'what will be the topic' and I would answer 'I don't know, let us see the audience'. When I reached the place and was called for speaking, I would chant the following two Mantras from Atharvaveda –

Om, Ashvinaa Saraghena Maa Madhunaanktam Shubhaspatee. Yathaa Bhargaswateem Vaacham Aaavadaani Janaan Anu.

Om, Ashvinaa Saaraghena Maa Madhunaanktam Shubhaspatee. Yathaa Varchaswateem Vaacham

Aavadaani Janaan Anu.

"O Asvinou (Saraswatee and God) please join my Buddhi and Chittam and link my soul with the souls of the listeners. Please provide me with suitable thoughts and words fit for the situation that carry sweetness and substantial meaning. May I be able to influence the audience through sweet, credible and impressive speech that would captivate the souls listening to me and enlighten and enrich them with spiritual prosperity."

With the chanting of this Mantra my Father would take my soul to the relevant file stored in my Chittam and start turning the pages and I would go on reading those pages to the audience. When the congregation was over the people would come to me and shower praises on me and I would say, 'please admire HIM and not me.' The people escorting me would say, 'How are you able to speak on various topics, totally different from each other and fit for the congregation without getting prepared earlier?' And I would just say, 'It is all Grace of God.' And that was true. I will never forget my Merciful Father Who has been helping me all my life.'

There are some people who argue that if meat eating is Hinsaa -violence then eating vegetables or fruits also is violence because all these trees and plants have life in them. The argument is wrong. Let me ask you. Do you feel pain when you undergo haircut or get your nails mended? Do you feel pain when you shave? Ask a mother who feeds her child on her breast whether she feels pain or pleasure. Why don't you feel any pain while you are being operated under the influence of anesthesia? All these things show that

they do not give us pain because the things involved are not connected with Chittam.

The same argument stands well with trees and plants, too. The trees and plants, no doubt, have soul in them, but they do not possess Chittam - the faculty of feeling. Upanishad clears the doubt - **"Oshadhi-Vanaspatishu Raso Drishyate Chittam Praanabhritsu"** - in trees and plants we see only Rasa - fluid or juice but in creatures we find Chittam." That is why the juice in them is white, not red (Hemoglobins in blood are the product of Chittam).

Blocking the growth or progress of a person also is Hinsaa. Yes, if we cut a tree or plant that is growing or green it is Hinsaa. Similarly, if we act for blocking the progress of a person or organization or for destroying unity of a community or nation it is Hinsaa.

2. Satyam - maintaining conformity between thoughts, words and actions is the main definition of Satyam. We should do like we say and we should say what we think. All these three should be identical. One should also be honest in dealings and truthful. If one says , "I shall meet you at such and such place at such and such time" he should see that he never fails in keeping his promise. Breaking promises or putting up false claims and going back on one's words are all various forms of dishonesty. By observing this Yama a person attains peace of mind, his mind and spirit are pure and he becomes fearless. A person who takes the help of lies in his dealings is always perturbed, because to conceal that one lie he has to think of a number of other lies that do not contradict one another at any point. And this is a big exercise in itself and strains the nerves of brain. A person dealing dishonestly may succeed in the beginning but ultimately he loses the ground and faces complete

destruction not only of his business but also of his own self. That is what Upanishad says, "**Satyameva Jayate Naanritam** - it is only the truth that prevails in the end, not falsehood." When Buddhi follows Chittam it is compelled to invent false statements to please the latter, but if Buddhi is on the front it will never take to falsehood. When a person practices this Yama he carries great influence in the society and is loved by God because he is just like HIM.

A person observing Satyam never bargains in business or cheats the other party. May be in the beginning his business does not flourish, but once his truthfulness and honesty is established and the people know that he is genuine and trustworthy in dealings he wins over the competition and no one dares excel him. Truth and honesty are the biggest strength of the soul. A person who is honest and truthful never fears anybody, is never cowed down by any one, is never disappointed because he knows that he has not cheated any one or his own self and that is the greatest satisfaction in his mind that makes him unconquerable. **A person is what his character is and the character means strictly following one's set principles**. A person, therefore, is known by his principles. God, too, has His set principles that are called "**Vratam**" in Sanskrit. The Yajurveda declares "**Vishnoh Karmaani Pashyata Yato Vrataani Paspashe** - do you want to know the definition of Vratam? See the actions of that Vishnu, the Omnipresent God, going on in this great Universe and you will know His Vratams, they are nothing but His set principles". For example, it is true that prayers and the words of admiration never flatter Him. He is never partial to any one not even to His devotees. It is wrong to say that He forgives all sins of His devotees. It is not true that He protects those who worship Him while he

destroys others who do not pray to Him. Selfish people exploit the ignorant devotees and meet their own ends by spreading all such false things. It is essential that we know His True Nature and develop the same in us. Observe His Vratams that are visible in sun, moon, air, fire and other things of the Universe, and try to follow them in life sincerely. Then, you yourself will become the embodiment of Satyam like your Father, God is.

3. Asteyam - not to steal other's money, belongings, comforts, sleep, peace of mind, ideas and time; not to conceal anything from others and not to commit fraud. To develop this character one should be sure that nothing in this world belongs to him but everything belongs to God and the people have been authorized by Him according to their Karmas to enjoy those things for a certain period. One should know that to snatch away a thing that has been gifted to someone else by God, is to rebel against God and disobey Him, which is an insult to Him and hence a great sin. This aspect of stealth is based on a person's selfishness, jealousy, ego, greed, unending desire to accumulate everything possible and a false notion that he alone is entitled to live comfortably in the world not others. God says, "**You are all alike, everyone has a right to live comfortably in the world and enjoy it as he likes.** When someone goes to another's house without having asked his prior permission or known about his convenience he steals his comforts. When one creates fear, disturbance or worries in other's mind he steals his sleep. When a foreteller scares a person by telling all kinds of wrong things to exploit his ignorance for his benefit he steals his money as well as the peace of mind. When a child goes against the instructions of his parents or elders and is caught in problems he steals the peace of mind not only of himself but also of his parents and elders.

That is why it is said, "**It doesn't matter if you cannot help in solving problems of the family, at least be careful that you do not create any problem.**" By creating problems one steals peace of mind, sleep and comforts of the elders who are concerned about him. There are a few shameless people who are not gifted with the art of writing stories, poems, songs or books but are very anxious to see their names printed on them and be admired by the people and so, they find out an easy way. They steal the stories and ideas given by others and publish them in their own names thinking that nobody can find out the reality. When a person promises that he will meet him at a particular time but keeps him waiting, he steals his time. When someone goes to one's house and keeps sitting and chatting with him without caring for the valuable time he is wasting, he steals his time. I have seen a number of marriages in U.S.A. where the Indians want to see that a good number of the Westerners attend the ceremony (because it is a thing of prestige for them as they want to show other Indians as to how much influence they carry with foreigners) and they assure them that the ceremony will start at 10.30 sharp in the morning, but on that particular day they come to the place of wedding with their family members at 12.00 noon and instead of apologizing for that uncivilized behavior they shamelessly declare "it is Indian time, you know, we rarely stick to the time we promise." They steal the time of their friends who are helpless and compelled to wait for them. It is a thing of regret that instead of feeling guilty for stealing other's precious time they think that they have done a superb thing by keeping a number of people waiting for them that shows what significant position they have in the society. They do not even feel ashamed of bringing a bad name to their own country (unfortunately there are a few who change their 'Mother' country after going

to America) as explaining their individual fault as a 'National Character'. Is it not a sin to put their motherland to such a shame?

Concealing a thing from those who are one's great well-wishers or friends is also a sin. The Vedas warn husband and wife "**Na Steyam Admi Manasaa Udamuchye** - take pledge that no one of you will enjoy anything without the knowledge of your spouse and will not conceal your ideas and thoughts from him/her". If we analyze we shall see that it is this kind of stealing that is at the root of a number of divorce cases. The tragic event of divorce will never happen if the couples do not have a gap of communication between them. The worst thing of regret with these cases is that it is the parents of the girl that provoke their daughter to tell lies or not to give out the secret of her family or open her mind to her husband. Do they understand what a hell they are creating for their daughter? Do they think that by breaking the well set home of their daughter they will have a comfortable sleep or a peaceful mind?

Committing fraud or cheating others is another kind of sin that is very prevalent in the world. There are communities, societies and nations that are notorious for these kinds of things. A person feels rather proud that he has cheated an innocent man. Fraud, some think, is the best means to flourish in business. They do not know that such things steal away the peace of mind of the person who does not observe this Yama of Asteya. How can a person expect to have a peaceful family life full of happiness when he himself is producing thorns in his mind and at home by going against this golden principle enunciated by God? Is he not actually cheating God?

4. Brahmacharya - observing celibacy, not wasting the vital fluid, the most valuable thing gifted by God. Whatever food we take culminates in this vital fluid that is the source of energy and strength in the body, intelligence and memory in the brain, resolution in mind, courage in heart and the best spiritual vitamin for keeping a person hale and hearty. Semen in males and vaginal juice in females are both valuable gifts of God in a human body. Manu says, "**Maranam Bindupaatena Jeevanam Bindu-Dhaaranaat** - wasting even a drop of this Veeryam (vital fluid) takes a person closer to death while saving a drop of it lengthens his span of life". The so called sex- experts in the West who, instead of cautioning the youth against wasting that fluid, support their misconceptions and assure them that 'there is no harm in ejaculating yourself every day, it will increase your vitality and strength'. They have not only immensely harmed the young girls and boys but also they are the root cause in spreading the diseases related to the sexual habits. (A few youths had been misguided and they claimed in the court that punishing them for minor sex was infringement of their human rights of privacy. Even beasts are more knowledgeable and disciplined in sexual affairs. How can then, such undisciplined and misguided sex hungry people be called human beings? And how can they claim for Human rights? It is however, a thing of great pleasure that the U.S.A. Supreme Court has held the rights of States to curb this sex among minors.) It is this fluid that helps a person in protecting his power of memory; produces vital force and protects immune system that prevents diseases from entering into the body. All Rishis and saints could remember Veda Mantras and teachings of their Gurus till last. The disciples of ancient times could understand the subtlest things of Dharma and spirituality without the help of printed books, just by listening to their Gurus

only for once. A single warrior could fight with hundreds of enemies and defeat them. The devoted people could work for days and nights without getting tired. The scholars had very sharp memories and intellect to explain even the subtlest things in a very simple language that could be understood even by laymen. The Yogis could fast for days together without getting starved and reach the stage of Samaadhi without any difficulty. How? Brahmacharya was the main cause. When a person devotes himself in the study of good books, spreading the message of God, working day and night for Him, worshipping and praying to Him, enjoying ecstasy in His Blissful company and establishing his self in the self, he does not have a chance to think of these worldly passions and saves this precious fluid, the biggest gift of God. Once Maharshi Dayanand was asked" don't you feel necessity for having sex for pleasure?" Maharshi replied," I do not have time even to think about it." Naturally, how can a person think of these absurd things of world passions even for a second when he is completely devoted to do good to the human beings and is all the time worried about their emancipation? The observing of celibacy, automatically, enables a person to control his senses and he goes on smoothly on the path of spiritual elevation. Brahmacharya is the source of good health, stamina, Yoga (meditation and Samaadhi) and salvation.

According to scriptures a king who wants to rule over his country successfully must have control over his senses. According to Chaanakya - **"Sukhasya Moolam Dharmah, Dharmasya Moolam Arthah, Arthasya Moolam Raajyam, Raajyasya Moolam Indriyajayah** - Dharma is at the root of happiness. It is based on Artha (finances) and finances are based on the kingdom while the success of a kingdom lies in self -

control." This self - control, mainly a control of sensuous desires, should be observed not only by the ruler but also by his administrators and citizens. Bhagawan Krishna says in Gita, "**Kaama Eshah Krodha Esha Rajoguna - Samudbhavah. Mahaashano Mahaapaapmaa Viddhyenamiha Veirinam** - Kaama (desires mainly sensuous ones) and Krodha (anger) are at the root of all sins. They are the products of Rajoguna. They are gluttons and great sinners. Take them to be your greatest enemies." A teacher or the head of educational institute should invariably be Brahmachaaree then only he could control his pupils. God is able to control all these things in the Universe just because He has no desires or selfish motives - **Achaaryo Brahmacharee Brahmachaaree Prajaapatih**." When the semen is drunk (not like westerners do but through Praanaayaama, through Sushumnaa) and absorbed in brain it makes a person clairvoyant, and he is able to see the things that a common man cannot. The semen thus, is transformed into the spiritual power and Vitality. There is a Brahmacharya Sookta in Atharvaveda that explains this in a big way. It was on the basis of these valuable hints that the Christian missionaries were asked not to get married and observe Brahmacharya so that they may involve themselves exclusively in the job of working for God and spreading His Word. It was this kind of their austere life that enabled the earlier Christian missionaries to spread this religion so fast in the world. Now, however, the time has changed, the missionaries are arguing with the Pope to allow them to get married and that is why the Christianity hss gone down in England itself and the work of propagation has deteriorated. Now, they are converting poor Asian and African people only through the Devilish methods of tempting them with money and sex.

5. Aparigraha - Parigraha means collecting all kinds of things (whether or not they are needed) from all quarters just to satisfy one's ego, false prestige and desires. It is this Parigraha that is the main cause of fluctuations in the financial markets. It creates more demand than it is necessary and that brings inflation. It is the main cause at the root of poverty, too. If the citizens of a country are made to understand what a great sin it is to create scarcity of things that causes a lot of troubles not only for the poor people of the country but also for the Government that has to import a lot of things just to feed the hungry mouths or meet the unnecessary needs of the extravagant people the country will never be bankrupt. This causes difficulty for the Government because the money is held up in unnecessary expenditures that block the progress of the country in other essential fields. That is why Bhagawan Krishna has called the people indulged in collecting things out of proportion without caring for the poor people that are hurt more by such actions, as Asuras. "**Idamasti Idamapi Me Bhavishyati Punardhanam** – the Asuras claim that this already belongs to me, now I shall have this, too." That is what is wrong with Pakistan. They shout "Hanske liya hai Pakistan, Ghuske lenge Hindustan" and the governments in Pakistan and Bangladesh are trying their best to see that more and more of their countrymen enter into and settle down in the bordering states of India. (One of our wisest and the most patriot Ministers declared that 'we must be liberal towards our brethren in these countries and open our borders for them to come in our country without any fear and settle down here). Why should Islam crave for encroaching others' lands? Why should they convert others and increase their numbers, if as they say, Islam is the Religion of humanity? Why should not Christians and Muslims concentrate more on improving the

characters and conditions of their followers if they really want to make this world an abode of God and bring peace to humanity?

This kind of a desire of possessing everything one looks at increases ego in the person and takes him away from God, because he, instead of helping humanity, creates a hell for them. This kind of selfish attitude impairs the man's efforts for cleansing his mind and blocks the spiritual upliftment of the soul.

3. NIYAMAS:

1. **Shoucham** - means purity and includes keeping Annamaya, Praanmaya and Manomaya Koshas pure as well as observing purity in financial dealings and other worldly behaviors.

Every person has 5 **Koshas** - namely, **Annamaya, Praanamaya, Manomaya, Vijnaanamaya and Aanandamaya.** A person with these Koshas is represented by a whole coconut. The outer cover, green or brown, of the coconut represents **Annamaya** - the gross body consisting of skin, bones, blood, nerves and veins, flesh and glands, etc. The fiber inside this hard outer cover represents **Praanamaya Kosha** (resembling the structure of lungs) that includes all 10 Pranas (**Praana, Apaana, Vyaana, Samaana, Udaana, Naaga, Koorma, Krikala, Devadatta, and Dhananjaya**) and vitality. **Manomaya Kosha** including Manas, Buddhi, Chittam and Aham is represented by the inner hard cover beneath the fiber. The tender white coconut inside this hard cover represents **Vijnaanamaya Kosha** and the sweet juice inside the coconut represents **Aanandamaya Kosha**. Aananda is nothing but Rasa "**Raso Vei Sah**" - ecstasy, and that is with God Who forms Aanandamaya Kosha in a person. Among these Koshas Aanandamaya Kosha, comprising of Brahman

alone is ever pure. Vijnaanamaya Kosha or soul is naturally pure but collects impurity when it accompanies mind and body. So, one should try to keep the soul detached from mind, body and senses and established in itself through Dhaaranaa, Dhyaana and Samaadhi. The Manomaya Kosha can be kept clean with the help of Pratyaahaara while Praanamaya Kosha can be kept neat and clean through Praanaayaama (all these things will be explained later in this chapter). Annamaya Kosha is kept clean through Aasanas, Praanaayaama, regular diet system and daily bath.

The daily routine: The best way to keep Annamaya Kosha is to have a regular daily schedule. Rise in the early morning (latest by 4.00 a.m.), brush teeth and fully wash your mouth and throat, practice Aasanas and Praanaayaama, do Shavaasana and then take bath in warm water. You can do Praanaayaama even after taking bath but Aasanas must be done before bath. Aasanas and Praanaayaama must be followed by prayers, Dhaaranaa and Dhyaanam. After having finished your prayer take light breakfast and then engage yourself fully with some productive and constructive work. Do not while away your time in Tamas (sleeping or wasting time in worthless talks or jobs that do not feed your mind and soul but waste your energy). Take full lunch (use spices or Tamarisk things like onions, garlic etc. very little.) Better avoid them as food. You may take them as medicines. Have a very simple food comprising of vegetables, fruits, salad, milk, curd, etc. **Never eat meat. It is not meant for human beings**. It spoils physical and mental health and blocks spiritual progress. Never be addicted to things like tea, coffee, wine, smoking, chewing or taking other drugs. They all spoil your brain, mind, and vital forces and create diseases that spoil your

health. In the evening have very light food (better if you skip the regular food and take only some milk and fruits). Go early to bed and before that meditate on God for a while and try to empty your mind from all kinds of worldly thoughts and worries. Then, instruct your mind and suggest to get up at 4 a.m. Say these words for a number of times that will set your biological clock (hypothalamus) which will produce essential hormones at the time you suggested and wake you up. Do not miss natural alarm ringing within you. It is only flashed. If your mind is in Tamas and Chittam insists to sleep a little more do not listen to it. Rise up and look at the watch. You will be surprised to see how accurate your biological clock is. This is how you should conduct yourself everyday and you will see that you are maintaining your health without taking any medicine. Remember, too much usage of medicine affects the brain and mind that influence your Pranas and Vitality. The weakened Pranas weaken the body. Do not take the things that do not suit your body, mainly the liver. Learn to say "NO" to your Chittam whenever it persists on taking or doing something that does not suit you. Worship "Kaala Devataa" the Time. Mind that not a single minute of your life passes through filled with bad thoughts or actions or is empty of good things. Prepare yourself to catch hold of the future, polish it when it becomes present with good ideas and actions and you will collect easily a polished past. Never do or take a thing that makes you lethargic and careless or create a problem that brings you tensions and worries. Never allow your mind to be depressed. Never be disappointed when you fail in any of your attempts and do not get what you had expected. Create a firm and strong mind that will strengthen your immune system and take care of your health more than a family doctor. This is how you can keep your Annamaya

Kosha neat and clean and that will help you in cleansing Praanamaya and Manomaya Koshas.

A. Arthashoucham - means purity in financial matters. It is said that the goddess Lakshmee has four hands. Hands represent protection and so it means that there are four ways to protect Lakshmee, i.e. wealth. They are –**Aaya, Vyaya, Bhoga** and **Daana.**

Aaya - one should be very careful while earning money. He should be honest, never hurt others, snatch others' belongings or destroy others' lives for his own comforts. It is said that even single rotten money (meaning the one not earned through honest means) that comes in the treasury spoils the whole of it and brings all kinds of sufferings to the house and family. "As the money comes so it goes" is a saying that warns us to resist temptations. **Vyaya** or expenditure is another main thing to be cared for. When we should observe **Asteyam** in earning money we should observe **Aparigraha** in spending it. We should see that every penny spent brings good and healthy food for body, mind and soul. We should also know about **Ashtalakshmee** - 8 kinds of wealth that guide us regarding preparing our family budgets. We are introducing them here very briefly. All these names of Lakshmee have been taken from the Vedas.

i. Dravinam: money that helps the soul in its elevation. The soul is expected to have an upward progress like a tree having its roots deep down in the earth. In the case of soul the earth is God.

ii. Dhanam: is invested in banks and companies for bringing more money.

iii. Raayah: is used for giving donations.

iv. Raadhah: is utilized for meeting household necessities.

v. Shreeh: is used for supporting the needy family members and children.

vi. Vasu: is used for housing, furniture and clothing, etc.

vii. Lakshmee: is used for outward show, fashion and extravaganza. The Vedas discourage to use money on this account, because it increases ego and promotes unhealthy competition in the family and society. It is the money of this category that entraps a person in a number of temptations and enslaves him. Once a person becomes a slave to Lakshmee she eats him out. Such money has been compared to a creep called Amarbel (the immortal creep) that extracts the juice of the tree it climbs and embraces and eats it out, as a result of which the creep flourishes at the cost of the tree that is dried and totally destroyed. Money of this category eventually destroys the person with whose support it grows.

viii. Dharma: Dharma is the property of the soul. A wise person uses all kinds of wealth referred to above for earning Dharma, the best wealth that supports the soul in all its lives. **Dhanaat Dharmam** - one should try his best to collect Dharma with the help of money. According to the Vedas "the wealth is like the stream of a river flowing down very fast that can not be controlled by any one." The wealth is not eternal but Dharma is. Dharma once collected is never spent out. It actually grows more when spent. Besides wealth supports a person only until he is in the world while Dharma supports the soul not only in this world but also in the births he has to take in the future. A wise man never purchases a transitory thing with an eternal

one, but an eternal thing (like Dharma) with a transitory one (like money). Besides, the money that is spent for buying Dharma is not actually spent, but it is deposited in the Bank of God, that is returned to the soul in the next birth with a multiple interest. We must have full faith in all these spiritual explanations.

B. Vaakshoucham: the purity of words. One should be very careful about it. The Vedas say, "never use a word that would hurt others. Select each and every word through Buddhi before you want to use it. Each and every word you use should be sweet like honey and for that purpose you should store honey in your heart. **"Jihvaayaa agre madhu me jihvaamoole madhoolakam."** God says, "develop yourself in such a way that whenever you go to someone's house you carry sweetness with you and when you come out of any house bring only those things with you that are sweet and full of happiness - **Madhumanme nikramanam madhumanme paraayanam"**. A person who is devoted to God and wants to develop friendship with Him declares, "whenever I use my tongue I shall shower only honey and nothing else - **"Yadvadaami madhumat tad vadaami"**. God warns in Yajurveda "even while you are correcting a person and criticizing him to destroy all bad habits and defects found in him, do not use harsh words but be a sweet-tongued person - **"Kukkutosi madhujihvah"**. The tongue is a marvelous gift given by God. One can go on lashing it and creating foes all over or can go on showering honey and making friends. The Eternal Dharma that comes from the Vedas says, "tell the truth but do so in a pleasing way, never convey the truth in a hurting way. Also never tell a lie to please any one - **Satyam brooyaat priyam brooyaat na brooyaat satyamapriyam. Priyam cha naanritam brooyaat esha dharmah sanaatanah."**

C. Vyavahaarashoucham: one should have a clear understanding while dealing with others. Civilized and cultured behavior in private as well as in public is very much appreciated. Never be rude to any one on any occasion. Even while meeting your foe receive him with folded hands and sweet words on your lips. Be impartial to your friends and foes. Never discriminate any one on the basis of creed, color, country or caste. The Vedas say, "be a man and deal on the basis of humanity." The Upanishad says, "feel your own self in everybody else - " **Yastu sarvaani bhootaany-aatmanneva-anupashyati. Sarvabhooteshu chaatmaanam tato na vichikitsati.**" He who feels his own self in every creature is a real Son of God. Such a person has neither any attachment nor any kind of grief in his life - "**Yasmintsarvaani bhootaan-yaatmeivaa-bhood-vijaanatah. Tatra ko mohah kah shokah ekatvamanupashyatah.**"

D. Vichaarashoucham - "Aa no bhadraah kratavo yantu vishvatah - let us collect only good thoughts from all quarters" - says the Veda. It will keep our Buddhi pure and unpolluted. Once we empty our mind of all bad emotions like anger, hatred, greed, selfishness, etc. our mind will stay pure and the Buddhi will produce only good thoughts.

2. SANTOSHA: means contentment. A person should work hard for earning money, but be contented with whatever he gets. Working hard is in the hands of a person but to have its result is not in his hands, because the results of one's actions depend upon his Karmas put up in the previous birth. If he does not get what he wants and starts worrying about it he will develop mental worries and tensions and fall prey to enormous diseases. He will also try to find out a number of other ways that will spoil his family as well as society. Santosha is advised only regarding the results of actions. A person should never be contented

with hard work. Similarly, one should not be contented with collecting knowledge.

3. TAPAS: means austerity. What is austerity? To stand on one leg, keep fasting for a number of days, to pierce needles all over one's body or stand upside down for hours together? No. As Shri Krishna says, "all these things that are done by giving troubles to one's body are not Saattwika Tapas but Taamasika ones. " Saattwika Tapas is to keep bearing with all kinds of troubles and difficulties that come on the way while treading the path of righteousness. "**Dvandva-Sahanam Tapah** - to keep going on the righteous path without caring for obstacles and sufferings is called Tapas." When a person wants to work for the society or bring some reforms that would take the society onwards, he necessarily faces a number of opposition because the world does not want to quit the bad things and habits easily. He may have to encounter the stiff opposition and the persons ready to hurt or even to kill him. If he keeps going on his path without fearing those people or is not disappointed when he does not have good results of his hard work he does Tapasyaa. Husband and wife do Tapasyaa to bring up their children so that they are well educated, cultured, industrious and intelligent and bring good name to the family. Tapasyaa makes a person well experienced. It strengthens his mind and increases his spiritual power. As the world stands opposing him and blocking his progress, he shuns the support of the world and is inclined towards God for all the support and help. He is more devoted to God and this devotion and dedication increases his spiritual power. When a person swims against the currents of the stream, naturally, his courageous step of going upstream raises his stamina that increases his mental and spiritual power. Thus, Tapasyaa is the best way to go closer to

God. A person, who wants to rise above the clouds of sufferings, he should, like an airplane, face the wind of opposition and fight with it vigorously.

4. SWAADHYAAYA: means self study that means studying his own self - i.e., introspection, as well as studying good books on his own to gather more informations and knowledge. **S**va + **ADHI** + **A**yanam the syllables in the word denote that the practice of studying good books regularly everyday as well as checking one's progress daily before going to bed elevates his soul and takes to the higher stages. According to Shri Yaajnavalkya in Shatapatha Braahmana "a person who takes to regular Swaadhyaaya never falls sick, has no tension, sleeps well and maintains good health." Reason? His mind is stabilized, calm and quiet, is away from the harassment of the world, his senses are all well under the control of his soul and so they never bring any filthy thoughts inside that would make a person physically or mentally sick. A person, however, should not read simple story books that give him pleasure and entertain him, but should go deep into the books that take him towards mental and spiritual development. This practice not only helps him in achieving success in concentration and meditation but also strengthens his brain. Brain consists of trillions of trillions cells. One should make efforts to keep them strong and healthy so that he is well established in his own self. A person who kills these cells by either not taking to studies or by drinking, eating and doing things that are detrimental to these cells loses his intellectual power in this life and is deprived of a good brain in the next birth, too. If he kills his brain totally, he is not born with a brain in the future birth and the soul comes in the body either of an animal or tree/ plant. The main formula in Karmic theory is that a

soul that misuses any of the senses or part of the body in the present life will not get it in the future and will come under a number of sufferings brought by the absence of that particular organ. That is why the Upanishad warns **"Swaadhyaayaat Maa Pramadah - never be negligent towards studying good books."** Besides, one should keep looking in one's own self and try to improve. This practice of introspection will surely put him on a good path that will take him towards peace and happiness.

5. EASHVARAPRANIDHAANA: means to have full faith in God, be devoted to Him, dedicate oneself in doing His work, realize Him in each and every creature, feel Him existing everywhere, work hard so that God never leaves his company, worship Him daily with all love and respect and spread His messages in the world for the benefit of other souls. When a person has full faith in God he is never perturbed or disturbed in any event or occasion. Even when he is facing adversities he thanks God because he knows that God is a Great benefactor and He will do nothing that will bring him calamity. In sufferings, he, instead of blaming and cursing God like a common man, develops his love for Him because he knows that God has been merciful to him to put him in those sufferings that would cut the chains of bondage and improve his life. He realizes by the Grace of God that sufferings are the only ways to burn the filth in him and that they will purify him from within just like the fire purifies gold.

When he dedicates himself to God he destroys his Ego and becomes a modest and humble soul. This humbleness makes him innocent and pure like a child and earns the love of all people around him. When he realizes Him existing in every creature he no more likes to kill them for filling his own belly. He knows, then,

that he is not killing only an animal but hurting God, his Father. When he feels Him existing every where he keeps away from telling a lie, stealing others' belongings and cheating others. Thus, by this Eashvarapranidhaana a person is gifted with a number of spiritual powers and taken away from the path of sins.

These are first ten steps in Yoga that are classified under Yamas and Niyamas. With these methods a person prepares himself for next steps of Yoga. They purify him from within physically, mentally and spiritually. This purification is a must to enter into Yoga. Those who discard them saying that they do not help a person and that one can go straight to meditation without going through them are misguided and are misleading others. There is no short cut either to Yoga or to the attainment of God.

3. AASANAS: are simple soft exercises that, if learnt from the very childhood when the nerves, muscles and bones are not stiff but flexible, help a person in preventing all kinds of diseases, strengthen his body and mind and keep him smart and active even in old age. Actually, he never feels old but always young and is ready to work for hours together without getting tired. The body is very much pleased with the person who devotes at least an hour every day in the early morning for these Aasanas because he respects and honors it and the parts of the body are ready to help him at all places and on all occasions. The Aasanas of neck, shoulders and back keep the spinal system alert and flexible that avoid spondylitis, back ache, arthritis of joints in shoulders and hands and never allow migraine or other kinds of headaches to set in and trouble the person. Those of belly keep each and every organ active and working. The person does not have

any diseases related to pancreas, stomach, abdomen, liver, spleen, gall bladder, prostate glands or kidneys. Those for legs and thighs keep him running and going and avoid arthritis in the knees or muscles. At first a person should do Aasanas that can be done in a standing posture - for example, moving freely his shoulders, elbows, hands, wrists, fingers, etc. first clock-wise then ante clock wise. Then he should bend his body (without bending legs) front and back and both sides. He should do all these things without a jerk, slowly, step by step, without hurting the organs. One should not be rude to his body, but very helpful and friendly. One should not rush in doing Aasanas and should give rest to the organs for a while before going to the next Aasana. Then, he should bend only his knees sitting in a half posture like a chair. He should come down and then stand up very slowly. This Aasana will help a person get rid of the arthritis of knees and he will be able to stand up or walk without any difficulty even in old age. Then, he should lift his heels standing only on the support of toes. This will cure the arthritis of heels and ankles and toes. Then, he should lift his toes standing on the support of his heels that will strengthen the heels and sciatica nerve and muscles of the legs.

These are very simple Aasanas but very effective. Then, he should lastly sit down and do the Aasanas for neck. First, bend the head front and back, then side to side trying to touch the shoulders, then turning back both sides as much as one can and move the head round clock-wise and ante clock wise stretching the nerves and bending the head every side as much as one can. Then, he should lie down and do Aasanas for belly and back. There are two Aasanas that one can do easily. One is to lie down on back and move the legs as a person moves them when riding a bicycle.

The other one is - lie down on your back and then, slowly raise your legs up, stop them on different angles (15, 30, 45, 60 and 90 degrees) for a while then, bring them down slowly stopping them again as done earlier. This Aasana will relieve you from all the diseases of the stomach and strengthen your pancreas, prostate glands, liver. kidneys and other organs and will prevent hernia. We have explained Asanas very briefly just to make our readers aware of the benefits that are very useful in one's day to day life.

Chapter 4

PRAANAAYAAMA

PRAANAAYAAMA - means **PRAANA + AAYAAMA** - to try to put Pranas under the control of the soul. Praana is the most important thing in our body. Manu says,

"Dahyante Dhmaayamaanaanaam Dhaatoonaam Hi Yathaa Malaah. Tathendriyaanaam Dahyante Doshaaḥ Praanasya Nigrahaat. - Just as a blacksmith intensifies the fire by bellowing and purifies the metal, a person doing Praanaayaama purifies the metals inside his body along with his senses and mind by bellowing the Pranas. There are 3 main Nadees through which the Praana works - i.e., Sushumnaa (lying inside the spinal cord), Idaa (running parallel to Sushumnaa to its left) and Pingalaa (running parallel to Sushumnaa to its right). Idaa is called 'Chandranaadee' while Pingalaa is called 'Sooryanaadee'. When Praana works through Idaa it brings calmness and peace, while that working through Pingalaa brings activeness. Praana works either through Idaa or through Pingalaa or Sushumnaa. When it works through Idaa we inhale and exhale through our left nostril. When we breathe through the right one it means that Praana is working through Pingalaa. When both our nostrils are open and we breathe through both of them simultaneously, it means that Praana is working through Sushumnaa. We should eat only when the left nostril or Idaa is at work. After taking lunch if we lie down for a while on our left side the right nostril will open and Praana working through it will help liver and other parts in stomach in digesting the food we have taken.

For doing Praanaayaama one should sit on a blanket spread on the hard floor. One should never sit on a sofa, soft bed or mattress that won't allow him

to keep his backbone straight. (Do not forget to take with you a clean towel or a few napkins for cleaning your nostrils). Then, he should lock his upper body by sitting in the posture of Siddhaasana. He should place the ankle of his left foot under Moolaadhaara Chakra (we shall explain briefly these Chakras in the next chapter) located at the small place between anus and genitals and place his right foot over it. Thus, the body is locked and it becomes easy for the person to do Praanaayaama without any difficulty. This posture also helps the person keep his backbone or Sushumnaa straight without which Praanaayaama does harm. Back, head and neck should always be kept straight. He should not have any tight clothes on the waist. The whole upper body should be kept loose so that Praanas move freely. Better if he does 'NETI' after brushing his teeth and clearing the nostrils. Neti is performed by drinking water through the nostrils. Take some water (lukewarm in winter and cold water in summer) in your right hand, place it under the nose, breathe in chanting OM in mind. For a few days you may feel some irritation at the root of nose or sinus. Later it will be easy for you. The Neti not only clears nostrils and makes performing Praanaayaama easy, it clears the whole portion of the head including eyes, ears, sinus and brain. Those who do this Yogic Kriyaa do not catch cold, flu, etc. and never suffer from any kind of headache. Their eyesight and power of hearing gets sharpened. They get better memory and power of understanding. The head that contains all important elements maintaining the body and is the main exchange office of the body is all cleansed and the person becomes more smart and active. Having made these preliminary preparations now one should do first Praanaayaama.

Praanaayaama 1. Exhale Praana (called Rechaka) to the utmost, empty your chest and lungs completely (but do not force it from the very beginning it will gradually get trained) stop the breath (called Kumbhaka) as long as you can (at the first instance stop it only for 10 seconds then lengthen the period gradually according to your convenience). During Rechaka Kumbhaka keep your neck and head straight. Then, exhale a little and immediately start inhaling Praana (called Pooraka), fill your chest and lungs with it, stop Praana inside for a while (called Kumbhaka) (at first only for 5 seconds). During Pooraka Kumbhaka bend your head and place the chin at the pit of the neck. This is one Praanaayaama. Perform such 3 cycles at least. Remember, The length of the period of Rechaka Kumbhaka (stopping Praana outside after exhaling) should always be two times more to that of Pooraka Kumbhaka (inhaling and stopping Praana inside). Now take some rest and leave Praanas work normally for at least 3 minutes.

Praanaayaama 2. Close the right nostril with your right hand thumb and exhale Praana through the left one, empty the chest and lungs. Then, close the left nostril with the middle finger of your right hand (both times only right hand will be used) and inhale Praana with your right nostril filling the lungs and chest. This is one cycle. Do this in three cycles. Take a little rest leaving Praanas to work normally.

Praanaayaama 3. Opposite to No. 3. Close the left nostril with the middle finger of the right hand and exhale through the right one. Then, close the left nostril with the right hand thumb and inhale through the left nostril. Do three times like this. Rest.

Praanaayaama 4. Working with Idaa. Close the right nostril with the right hand thumb and perform

Rechaka and Pooraka from the left nostril. Do like this three times using only the left nostril. Rest.

Praanaayaama 5. Opposite to No. 4. Now, close the left nostril with the middle finger of the right hand and exhale and inhale only through the right one. Do like this three times. Rest. Each time you exhale try to empty your chest and lungs as much as possible. Take it, however, easy and do not force at any time. The Praana will itself be trained gradually.

Praanaayaama 6. Repeat No. 4 without taking the help of the right hand thumb to close the right nostril.

Praanaayaama 7. Repeat No. 5. without taking the help of the middle finger of your right hand to close the left nostril.

Praanaayaama 8. Close the right nostril with your right hand thumb and exhale and inhale fully through your left nostril. Then, close the left nostril with the middle finger of your right hand and exhale and inhale fully through the right nostril. This is one cycle. Do like this three times.

These are very simple Praanaayaamas that anybody can do without the guidance from any Guru. They will help you a lot. They will cleanse your eyes, nose, throat and ears. You will not have any kind of cold, cough or flu. The power of vision in your eyes will increase and you will not have any eye-diseases. It will prevent cataract. If you continue them during your whole life you will never have weak eyesight even after you are 50. Your ears will be completely cleansed from inside and drums will be strengthened. You will never have hard hearing. Your temples and nerves in head will be so strong and healthy that you will never have migraine or any kind of headache. The cells in your brain will be active and sharpened and you will

have a sharp memory as well as the power of understanding. You will be able to keep writing and reading all day long without getting tired. The Pineal, Pituitary and Thyroid glands will be activated and they will help your mind in controlling senses and in meditation. The Praanas will appreciate if you do not take in bad things or drinks, because these things compel them to do more work for cleansing the filth created in you and will grow weaker. If you control yourself in eating and drinking they will never get tired or exhausted and sharpen all your senses, nerves, cells and glands. You must know that once your head and glands and senses are strong and healthy, you will never develop any disease anywhere in the body because their agents work all over its parts. When the Hypothalamus, which is in midbrain and is the most important element in the body, is strong and healthy all the agents in the body will be strong and healthy and strengthen endocrine and immune systems. They will create a strong resistance power in the body and then no disease will attack your body. The body becomes real **Ayodhyaa** (a strong fortress that cannot be overpowered by any enemy).

Can you guess now how much these Pranayamas, that do not cost anything in the terms of money, help you in your life? They will not let you fall sick and will help you in sustaining your strength and mental and spiritual power. Your work will never be hindered. You can take long journeys without getting tired. They will save your hard earned money that you ignorantly spend for paying the bills of doctors and pharmacists. The money so saved will bring you all kinds of pleasures and you will lead your life with your family in all happiness. Wisdom lies in saving money and health, not in earning it and spending foolishly. Remember, the best man is he who is never compelled

to take the help of doctors and lawyers in his life. Do not follow the foolish people who take visiting hospitals and doctors to be the fashion of the modern life. I have seen a number of rich people who boast of telling us how many thousands of rupees or dollars they spend every month for treatment. Lakshmee laughs at these people and swears not to entertain them in their next lives.

These Pranayamas and Aaasanas set your body in such a way that it will have food, drink, sleep and enjoyment well balanced. That is what Shri Krishna says in Gita - **"Samatvam Yoga Uchyate - Yoga means to keep blood pressure, sugar, pulses, heart beating and all other things in the body well balanced and this is supported by well balanced diet. Aasanas and Pranayamas help in keeping the diet well balanced.** They set the clock in the body that rings the alarm bell if the person starts taking more than the body is ready to take in or if the food is not suitable to it..

Praanaayaama 9. Here are two more Pranayamas that are not very difficult for practising. Fill your chest and lungs with Praana by inhaling and then vomit it by force through your mouth. Do thrice like this. It will help in throwing out phlegm stuck in lungs, chest, arteries, pharynx and larynx. The phlegm is the most dangerous thing in the body. It blocks the way of Praanas moving all over. If its path of movement is kept cleared no respiratory diseases will give you trouble. You will never have asthma, bronchitis, pneumonia, cough, etc. You must know that coughing is not an enemy but a helper. When there is some phlegm stuck in the channel Praana develops coughing to throw that phlegm out (and we are so ignorant that we want to stop coughing and take medicines that dry the phlegm inside. Once the phlegm is dried and we do not cough any more we think that we have been

cured permanently but what we think is wrong. The dried phlegm does not loose its force. Just like a blocked current of water seeks for another outlet the phlegm too, seeks for another outlet and develops into some other horrible disease for which the Allopathy has no permanent treatment but only a temporary relief). We are surprised when they say, " we are sorry we do not have any permanent cure for diabetes, pneumonia, asthma, arthritis, liver troubles, etc. Besides, these medicines administered for temporary relief have their side effects that bring more diseases and a person becomes permanent abode of diseases for which there is no permanent cure and is pushed gradually towards death. Aasanas and Praanaayaanmas keep a person away from all these agents of death (Yamadootas).

Praanaayaama 10. Do you want to keep your teeth and gums strong, prevent pyorrhoea, save your teeth from falling out earlier so that you are able to chew and cut the things even in your old age, save yourself from the bleeding of gums and horrible tooth aches that create uneasiness in the head, eyes and ears, and prevent cavity? Then, do this Praanaayaama regularly. Open your lips (do not look at the mirror to see how awkward it looks to make a face), close your teeth and then inhale through the mouth (from both sides turn by turn) and exhale through the nostrils. For strengthening upper teeth and gums open the upper lip wide, for side ones the side lips, for lower ones the lower lips. Do as many times as you can and you will be pleased to have the best result. You will have strong teeth and gums and save yourself from all aches and pains.

(By the way, here is a very useful treatment for gum-sore, bleeding gums and even pyorrhoea. Take

some grains of dry fenugreek (Methee) seeds. Put them in water and boil for a while. You will have a decoction. When it is bearably hot rinse your mouth with it in such a way that the water reaches all the corners inside. You will feel it very soothing for the gums. Do like this for 5 to 10 minutes and at least twice a day in the early morning after brushing teeth and at bedtime.)

These are all very simple and easy Praanaayamas. There are a number of others like Kapaalbhaatee, Bhastrikaa, etc. They are very difficult and should not be practised without the guidance from an expert Guru.

5. PRATYAAHAARA - means to withdraw one's senses from the outward objects and employ them in the works to be done inside for strengthening the mind and soul. A person should try to become introvert. That is why the scriptures discourage the people worshipping idols. Even the books that vouchsafe idol worship instruct to do Dhyaanam at the end and become introvert and see God inside at Aajnaachakra, Somachakra and Sahasraarachakra step by step. But the people think that they should not do all these things. They think that the idol worship is the best short cut for the people who cannot afford more time in worshipping the Lord (how unfortunate they are and how childish! They can afford to waste the valuable time in playing cards, drinking and smoking for hours, but they do not have time for God Who is the Greatest Helper). They just go to the temple, stand before the deity, bow their heads, hit their temples with the fists asking Him to pardon all their sins they have committed the previous day and night and come out after taking Prasadam from the priest. It takes not more than two minutes during which nothing in their bodies like senses, minds, thinking, liking, etc. get

cleansed. They come out with the very filth in their minds they had carried with them while going into the temple. They, however, take for granted that God has forgiven all the sins and their vessels are totally empty to be filled up again with wrong doings that can be asked to be cleaned the next day. Actually, this kind of worship has increased the sins and crimes in the world. The scriptures advocating idol worship do not endorse this kind of practice. They instruct to do Dhyaanam in the end but it cannot be practised without going through **Pratyaahaara.** Without practising Dhyaanam a person can never cleanse his mind.

What is Shivalingam ? The learned scholars saw that the idols created by them had not been able to train the people in practising Dhyaanam in a proper way because they were concentrated more on the beauty and limbs of the body of the deity like, eyes, lips, etc. which developed attachment towards their outward figure and made them extrovert. Therefore, they created the figures that did not have any face or sense organs. Shivalingam is one of them. Also there are some deities whose face is not at all clear. The Shivalingam is actually the flame of lamp that demonstrates how the mind of a person meditating should be. Gita says, **"Yathaa Deepo Nivaatastho Nengate Sopamaa Smritaa - the mind of a meditating person should be stable like an unflickering flame of a lamp kept in a place where it is not disturbed by the currents of winds."** So, actually, this is not a Lingam, but the flame of the lamp. When the period of Vaama Maarga started it was interpreted in the terms of Taantrika practice of Yoga that explains how a Yogi can drink the Veeryam along with Rajas of his partner (a woman)for attaining the highest state of Siddhi.

Shivalingam has another important meaning, too. Lingam means a visible thing that enables a person to see an invisible thing. For example, suppose we see smoke rising somewhere. We are able to realise that there must be something burning, because fire and smoke go together. Similarly, God (Shiva) is invisible but a number of things are there in the Universe that signal Him. The earth, too, is one of those things. It's shape is like that of a Lingam narrowed down at the top and bottom but wide in the middle. It has 3 stripes or lines, too – Cancer (in the north), Equator (in the middle) and Capricorn (in the south). The sun does not go beyond Cancer or Capricorn and moves in the limits. It has the Shakti (power), too and that is called gravity. The earth is the best means to enable a person to SEE the existence of the invisible God.

Maharshi Patanjali, explaining a number of means for concentration says, **"Yathaabhimatadhyaanaad Vaa - one can concentrate his mind on a thing he likes the best"**, but that is only for Dhyaanam (concentration) not for meditation or Samaadhi. Pratyaahaara is the first step for achieving the state of meditation. Therefore, he is very clear that one should not stop at this step but proceed further and gradually reach the last one. Thus, up to Praanaayaama the steps are meant for preparing for meditation through **Shareera-Shuddhi, Praanashuddhi, Manahshuddhi, Vichaarashuddhi and Aatmashuddhi** (i.e., purification of body, vital forces, mind and spirit). Without having cleansed them one should not jump at meditation or Pratyaahaara, because he will not succeed there. Success in the second half of Ashtaanga Yoga can be achieved only with the help of strong body, mind and soul that can be achieved only through their purity. Impurity in mind, Praana and body makes them weak.

How to accomplish Dhyaanam? Through Pratyaahaara. How to practice Pratyaahaara? Here is the way. Learn to stop your Chittam and senses whenever they want to go out and contact an object that is unsuitable to your mind and soul. Use your power of resolution (**Sankalpa Shakti**) and say 'NO' to the mind and senses. Have a good knowledge of right and wrong and be strong enough to stop them from going towards wrong things. Sometimes, the mind starts dreaming of things. Stop it and lead it away from them. The best and easiest way to do this is to start chanting 'OM' whenever such a situation arises. You can also stop bad emotions and feelings from entering into your mind. Suppose a person comes to you and starts showing his anger and abusing and cursing you. This kind of behaviour, no doubt, will create a reaction in you and your Chittam will say to you, "do not keep quiet. He is insulting you and your pride is hurt. Pay to him in the same coins and hit him on the head if you can." A common man who is ignorant of the gentlemanly ways of dealing in such situations will fall prey to the bad advice given by his Chittam and start hitting and abusing. But a wise-man will think, " If I, too, start abusing and hitting him what difference will be there between an ignorant and a wise person. What will be the use of so much learning? No. I should not come to a low level like him." He will try to ignore him and his words and keep quiet. In the end he will say," OK brother, you have opened your mind to me, I am grateful to you. May God bless you," and will go on his way. This is Pratyaahaara. He successfully controlled his mind and did not behave in a foolish way. Similarly, we can control all our senses and prevent them from going on wrong ways. The easiest way is, as said earlier, close your ears and eyes with the chant of "OM" and you will see the miracle. OM the God will come to you

and give you mental and spiritual power to face the unwanted situation. Another benefit of this Pratyaahaara is that you will not be disturbed and will enjoy peace and happiness while your enemy is burning in the fire of anger and jealousy.

6. DHAARANAA - Having successfully accomplished Pratyaahaara, now climb the step of Dharanaa." **Deshei -kabandhash -chittasya Dhaaranaa" - keeping one's Chittam tied to a particular spot of a thing is called Dhaaranaa".** This is the second step of concentration. In great Yajnas the priests fix a pillar called Yoopa (Yajna-Stambha). It is a wooden pillar fixed in the earth for tying a Pashu. Pashu is that which creates obstructions in a Yajna. Here it is the Chittam. Here is a story from Mahabharat that will explain this aspect. Paandavas and Kauravas were getting training in archery from Guru Dronaachaarya. The Guru wanted to test their expertise. He called them and said, "Look, you have to pierce the retina of the right eye of the parrot kept at the top of the tree. Let me see who can do that successfully." He called Duryodhana and asked him, "What do you see here?" "I see a big tree and a parrot sitting on it." The Guru said, "sorry, you have failed." Then, he called Yudhishthira. He thought that he should be a bit more careful in answering the Guruji's questions. He said," I do not see the tree but only the leaves that are covering the parrot." He was also discarded by the Guru. Arjuna was asked in the last. He said, "I see only the pupil of the right eye of the parrot." He asked him to hit it and he did. The Guru congratulated him for passing the test. Other disciples protested, " But you did not give us a chance to hit the eye," The Guru said, "When you are too weak to even concentrate on the spot you are going to hit, how can you succeed in aiming at it?" Therefore, before jumping to meditation first try to achieve success in

fixing your attention at one point. Try like this - light a lamp. In the beginning you will see the lamp, the wick and the flame. Now, try not to see the lamp and the wick, fix your eyes only on the flame. Then, move further. Now fix your glance only on the tip of the flame. Keep looking at it without blinking as long as you can, you will have tears in your eyes, now close your eyes and see that tip of the flame inside at the point of Aajnaachakra - on the forehead between the eyebrows. Stay like that until it gets dim. Do like that again and again. Repeat the practice as many times as you can. You will achieve the stage of Dhaaranaa. This is Drishti-Dhaaranaa - concentration through eyes.

Now, Shruti-Dhaaranaa. Chant Gaayatree Mantra for a number of times. Then, take only OM from that Mantra and chant it aloud for a number of times, first pronouncing 'O' for a long time and closing at 'M'. Then, shorten the chant of 'O' and give more time for chanting 'M' by lengthening it. After every chant stop uttering aloud and try to grab the sound (a humming sound follows the chant) and fix your mind in it. Do it a number of times.

Now, the second step in Drishti-Dhaaranaa and Shruti-Dhaaranaa. Do not light any lamp. Just sit at the fixed place and try to grasp that glow inside and fix your mind on it. You may see the glow at Aajnaachakra or Anaahatachakra (near your heart) as you like. Concentrate on that glow and do not allow your Chittam to divert. If it does move away pull it and fix it again at the glow. This practice will strengthen your mind and finally your Chittam will behave. Similarly, in Shruti- Dhaaranaa hear the humming sound without taking to chanting. Concentrate on it as long as you can.

Both these methods are Saakaara Dhaaranaa. Now, Niraakaara Dhaaranaa. Chant Gaayatree Mantra. Select one of the words or phrase you like the most. Get its meaning. Leave the words and sounds that are Saakaara, go straight into the meaning enter into it and fix your mind and soul in that meaning. If you make further efforts in this field you may feel God in it because God is in each and every word of the Veda Mantras, but HE is hidden in the gross words and manifests behind the meaning. Similarly, take OM. Get its meaning. Concentrate on that meaning and you will contact that Supreme Being in it. Whenever you have any problem, just sit at the place where you have been chanting the Mantras or OM regularly and practising Dhaaranaa, concentrate on OM without chanting for a few minutes and then put your mind to the real problem, go deep in it and contemplate for a few minutes you will find a solution and will come out happily freed from all tensions and worries. Do not boast about your practices or experiences to any one, just act on the suggestions and you will succeed. Do not argue about the solution either in your self or with others. If you do that you will lose the grip and will fail in your attempt. Have full faith in God. Any solution given by Him is always fruitful and will never harm but benefit you.

7. DHYAANAM - "Tatra Pratyayeikataanataa Dhyaanam - when a person fixes his mind at one point, he develops a kind of experience. The continuity of that experience for long without the mind getting diverted and without any break is called Dhyaanam. This is meditation. For achieving this stage one must go through all the steps explained earlier. (And remember, this is not the last point, we have to go further to realise self and God as well, this is only training the mind for the purpose. It is only the soul that realises the self

and God, the mind has no say in it) The word 'Pratyaya' clearly indicates that one cannot meditate on 'Shoonyam - emptiness or 'nothing'. The experience cannot flow from nothing. For feeling one must contact a positive point. When this Dhyaanam is applied to obtain the meaning of a word we get it. Let me explain how it happens. You know the power of laser rays. When we want to break an iron piece at some particular point we cocentratedly apply that flame or ray on that point for a long time and the chain gives away. Similarly, when we want to get into the meaning of a word, we first practise Pratyaahaara (do not think of any thing other than that word), then practise Dhaaranaa (fix our mind and intellect with all its knowledge on the structure of that word) then we apply Dhyaanam (continue that analysis and observation for a long time). When we do so, the power of our mind, the intelligence (that is like a laser ray) splits that word and we find out the meaning. One thing is there, if we do not have the support from God (that can be achieved by faith, love, devotion and total submission to Him) we shall never succeed in these Yogic practices and we shall never know the correct meanings of the words given by God or great men. **The Vedas, Upanishads or the books like Gita can never be interpreted or explained with the help of man-made dictionaries. They can be explained only with the help of the books written by Rishis who wrote them through Yogic powers and God's help. Even for understanding Shri Rama, Shri Krishna or Rishis one must have the help of God, otherwise we cannot reach the intellectual stage of those Rishis and great men.**

8. SAMAADHI - means to become ONE. We have explained what is meant by meditation and how we can achieve that stage. Next stage of Samaadhi can be achieved either with the help of a Guru, the support of the elevated soul achieved from the previous birth

or the support from the Almighty. The practice of meditation and obedience to God enables a soul to see into itself, realise itself, and become Gunaateeta. Then, it is so absorbed in the Self that it forgets everything else and starts entering into the Spirit of God. A wise person, with the help of a little bit of Dharma he practises in life, can have Darshan of God in the form of sudden flashes (provided he is alert, humble, devoid of ego and has full faith in God's existence and support). Besides, when he writes books, articles, poems and songs or gives speeches, sermons and lectures before different kinds of audience and at different situations and times, he knows that it is only God and not he who speaks and writes. He is just a conductor or medium. It is the hand or mouth of the person that writes or speaks but it is God Whose words (yes, not only informations but appropriate words for the situation) flow through his hand or tongue. This is a kind of Samaadhi, too when the soul and God become one and do the job. The wise person clearly sees his Father helping Him. Similarly, when the people in the audience listen to the words of a speaker attentively they are in Samaadhi.

When a Yogi successfully enters into God with the self, he feels all delight and says, "I see You, I am in You, I feel You". This stage of Samaadhi where the difference between I and You still persists is called "Savikalpa Samaadhi". When he goes to the next stage this difference is gone and the 'I' changes into YOU, or 'YOU' becomes I and the self is established in the SELF. It is called "Nirvikalpa Samaadhi".

According to Gita the word Samaadhi is very much connected with the worldly actions, too. When a lady in the house cooks food with one mind, a farmer works in his field with all concentration, a labourer works in

the factory or on a road in the scorching sun and heat without being disturbed and a student reads his book or writes the examination paper with a concentrated mind, they are all in Samaadhi. It is this kind of Samaadhi that produces the marvellous result. (**Yogah Karmasu Kaushalam** – it is this kind of Yoga that brings dexterity and beauty in the products. No doubt, when a spiritual person successfully explains spiritualism to the audience he does so being absorbed in Samaadhi alone.

JAPA - Japa or chanting is the best means for concentration. But Japa does not mean to repeat a Mantra without knowing or keeping the meaning in mind. Mere repeating a Mantra with the help of beads and allowing the mind to wander all over while tongue keeps chanting Mantra is just a waste of time. There are some people who keep walking or attending to their daily works and keep telling the beads kept in a small sack hanging with the right hand wrist. That is what Kabir says, " the fingers keep moving inside the sack telling the beads, the tongue keeps moving inside the mouth and the mind keeps moving all over the world thinking of its own things. This is not the correct way of meditating on the beloved God." Here is the right method of doing Japa.

First, select a place that is free from all kinds of hazards, disturbances and harassments. You should be able to think of Him without being diverted by the worldly worries. So, either finish all your necessary things of the day first and then sit for chanting with a free mind, or get up early in the morning when you know that nobody will disturb you or you do not have anything very essential to attend to. Have a fixed place for all kinds of worships and chants. Sit there and chant OM aloud as many times as you can. This

chanting of Om will create a suitable atmosphere electrified with spiritual vibrations and your mind will become concentrated. Then, start chanting the Mantra you like the most and is the easiest for you in whispering voice as long as you can, but do not keep looking at a watch for timing. It will divert you and make you extrovert that is the biggest obstacle on the way of concentrating one's mind. Chanting is a device that enables a person to change the working style of his mind and makes him introvert. If this does not happen the chanting becomes useless. Now, stop working with your tongue and chant that Mantra in your mind. Keep chanting like that and try that your mind practices this Upaanshu Japa (chanting in the mind without using the tongue) more and more.

Better than this way is that you chant OM first pronouncing with a stress on O and resting in the end on M. Chant it as many times as you can. This chanting aloud will create a spiritual fall out of the sound in the atmosphere. Now, stop chanting and concentrate your mind on the sound that is formless. This will easily take you towards Upaanshu Japa.

Can one chant any name of God? Yes. But the best name is the one that belongs to Him alone. All other words have a number of meanings and so there is a chance that your mind will stop at some other meaning, not on God. Also, it is better to select a name that does not have any consonant. Because to pronounce a consonant one must use his tongue while for chanting a Swara or vowel the use of tongue is not necessary. A Mantra or name that requires the use of tongue and teeth the least is the best and easiest for a chant. The final target is that one should be able to continue the chant just with the help of Praana. Let me make it clear. The chant should continue until the

last breath so that a person keeps chanting and remembering nothing but God at the time of death. It is the most important thing. That is what Bhagawan Krishna says, "with whatever ideas a person leaves the body, he gets the next birth suited to those ideas alone -**Yam Yam Vaapi Smaran Bhaavam Tyajatyante Kalevaram. Tam Tameveiti Kaunteya Sadaa Tadbhaavabhaavitah.**" Therefore, the best way is that we train our Praana in chanting, so that it continues the same even when our other organs stop working. And the best chant for Praana is a Mantra that is a complete Swara, because Praana is Swara, it can't chant a consonant sound. Suppose you select the word Rama for chant, the Praana will not be able to pronounce R or Ma because both of them are consonants and need a tongue, teeth or lips for a correct chant. If it chants only 'Aam' instead of Raama, it will be a wrong chant. The Mantra OM consists only Swaras. O one Swara and M another. Here M is not a consonant because it does not contain any vowel. This is the beauty in OM. M is called Moordhanya Swara and as Praana also feels easy to stop in cerebrum with every chant, it goes with it smoothly. With the words Rama and Krishna the Praana stops in the cave of the mouth that is far below the cave of cerebrum where the soul can meet God. We should think of all these things while selecting a Mantra for chant. It is not a question of any emotion or bias. Another benefit of this chant of OM is that while Praana chants this and reaches the cerebrum with every chant it brings peace to the mind that is very essential for a peaceful undisturbed death. Practice it and see it for yourself. That is why Shri Patanjali said, " the best word for chanting is OM - **Pranava "Tasya Vaachakah Pranavah"**. Pranava means a name that keeps a soul ever fresh (Pra + Nava). All Upanishads and even Gita supports this idea :"**Omityekaaksharam Brahma Vyaaharan**

Maamanusmaran. Yah Prayaati Tyajan Deham Sa Yaati Paramaam Gatim - The mind should think of ME (meaning not Krishna but God) and his Praana should continue chanting OM that is Ekaaksharam (one lettered word) and is Brahma (the God Himself). When a soul does like that at last moments it goes to the Supreme Abode." What a beautiful explanation! OM is God because God is Swara, Eka and Akshara (One and Immortal) and the chant OM also is Ekaakshara. When you chant OM you chant the God Himself. When you chant other names you chant not Him but His adjectives that stand for Him. See the difference. For example, my name is Satyam. I am called father by my children, brother by my brothers and sisters, uncle by my cousins and nephews, teacher by my students, Guruji by my disciples, etc. etc. All these are adjectives that stand for me, while Satyam is only ME. Satyam does not stand for me, it is ME. So, during the last period of life one should think of God, be in Him, be covered by Him, should stay in Him and chant HIM with his Praanas. Thus, the Buddhi, Manas, Chittam, Aham and Praana will all be in Him alone and with them the soul will be one with Him and leave the body without thinking of anything else. Is it not the best chant? Do not you agree with Rishis? The Rishis have given their own experience. Why don't you have full faith in them? Practice it and you will find the truth by yourself.

Now, you may ask me how to train Praana? Here is the easiest method. Sit on a sofa or wherever you feel comfortable. Whenever you have a chance to sit quietly without bothering for your daily work, practice like this. Relax totally. Empty your mind of all thoughts and worries. When you inhale let the Praana chant O, then, when you exhale let it chant M. Keep doing that until you are called by your worldly duties. See, how

peaceful your mind becomes. Praana wants this exercise. It is its food. Give Praana its food, the oneness with Brahman.

Even music is the best thing for concentration. Do not go for words, just stay in the tune. Words are material and they will divert your mind. But the tune is formless, only sound. That will enable you to concentrate easily. The music takes a person straight into meditation when he concentrates on the melody. There is music every where in the world. All these things in the world are singing. The waves of ocean sing their own songs and keep singing day and night, the rivers, streams, plants, trees, sun, moon, stars, air, breeze, storm, birds, insects every thing and creature is taking part in the concert of God. They are all in harmony with Him. Only the man is out of tune. He misses that Eternal tune due to his foolishness. He is absorbed in materialism so much that spirituality prevailing in the Universe is out of his reach. That is why he is disturbed, perturbed and restless. He alone is uncomfortable whlie everything else is having peace and carrying the message of peace. Please go through Chhandogya Upanishad for further information. Saamaveda represents this Universal Eternal music. Let us be the part and parcel of that extraordinary music and have peace and happiness. This body itself is like a flute. The people say that whenever Shri Krishna played a note on his flute all the cows and Gopies were attracted towards him and would not leave him. God is like Shri Krishna for Yogis. When they are one with Him He plays on this flute and it is that Note that makes their sermons so attractive.

that eternal sound becomes. Prana works this exercise if it is lost. Give Prana its lead, the oneness with Brahman.

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Chapter 5

CHAKRAS

"**Ashtaachakraa Navadvaaraa Devaanaam Poorayodhyaa**" – this body is **Ayodhyaa** – the city that cannot be conquered. It is a city of Devas. It has eight Chakras and nine entrances." Ayodhyaa was the capital of Kaushala. Shri Rama was the king. He was a very pious and noble ruler. Under his ruling the capital was so strong that no enemy could attack or conquer it. The body too should be like Ayodhyaa. The diseases, bad emotions, thoughts and ideas are like enemies. The soul should be very careful and vigilant so that no enemy is able to attack or conquer it. How is it possible? It is possible when the soul is pious, strong and noble like Shri Rama.

This body has nine entrances – 2 eyes, 2 ears, 2 nostrils, mouth, anus and genital. It has 8 Chakras, too. They are **Moolaadhaara, Svaadhishthaana, Manipoora, Anaahata, Vishuddhi, Aajnaa, Soma and Sahsraara Chakras.** We shall describe these Chakras very briefly.

Moolaadhaara – There is a small space between genital and anus. This Chakra is located at that place. These Chakras are not visible like glands, but can be felt as energy-centres. This point in the body controls the genital and flow of vital fluid. When a Yogi sits in Siddhaasana pressing it with the ankle of his left foot he controls the region and becomes **'Oordhvaretaa'**. The vital fluid – semen in a person located in testicles changes its course. It no more flows down through the genital but goes up through Sushumnaa. The semen is burnt in the fire produced by Praanaayaama and changes into **Ojas, Tejas and Varchas - the three Spiritual powers.** Ojas is connected with the power of

thought, speech and action. It creates fire, enthusiasm and spirit in thoughts, words and actions and makes a person brave and influential. Tejas is connected with the Praana and blood. This brings splendour and glamour on the face of a person and makes him great active and smart. Varchas is connected with the mind. It changes a person into a man of great wisdom. memory and experience. It brings self-confidence, self-esteem, self-reliance, independence, will power and clear vision in a person. When the Moolaadhaara is activated through Siddhaasana and Praanaayaama the person never has any complaint of discharge of semen etc. He is able to control the sexual urge as a result of which the person becomes a man of strong character and mind. A number of diseases connected with sex are driven away from him and that creates the power of resistance and immunity in him. Consequently he seldom falls ill and is never tired or gets fatigued though he works day and night. A person is physically tired only when he has mental fatigue. The control of this Chakra never allows a person to get mentally tired. He never falls prey to depression, disappointment, tension or worries. He stays positive and creative.

Svaadhishthaana – is located above and at the root of the genital. It covers prostate gland. The heel of the right foot pressing against it during Siddhaasana activates this Chakra that effects the prostate gland. Resultingly the person does not develop the diseases connected with the weakness of the gland. The nerves are strengthened and the urinary system is taken care of.

Manipoora - is located at the navel. Navel is a very important part in the body. All the nerves join here. This is the centre of Annamaya Kosha. Therefore this Chakra is an important Chakra. By meditating on this

you can activate it and cure the diseases pertaining to Annamaya Kosha. It covers small and big intestines, kidneys, liver, spleen, pancreas and gall bladder. By applying a little bit of ghee everyday in the navel and rubbing it for a while after taking showers you may treat your dry skin as well as lips. By activating Apaana at this centre through Praanaayaama and concentration on this Chakra as well as putting some pressure on the exit of the anus you can move the bowels and treat constipation. By activating Praana situated here with the Aasanas pertaining to belly and simultaneously concentrating your mind on pancreas, particularly on the first two parts (A and B concerned with digesting as well as insulin producing system) you can cure your diabetes. Similarly, by Aasanas pertaining to the belly along with concentration on the kidneys, gall bladder or other parts of Annamaya Kosha you can keep all these parts healthy and in order. By putting a wet cloth on this Chakra at the navel you can treat heat in Annamaya Kosha.

Anaahata – is near the heart and covers Praanamaya Kosha including heart and lungs. It is located on the right side of the heart. This is the spiritual and Yogic heart. The physical heart keeps beating with a drumming sound while this heart does not make any sound. That is why it is called Anaahata. This explains why the wife is seated on the left hand side to the husband in the rituals pertaining to physical love while in all other kinds of Yajnas concerned with Spiritual Love she is seated to his right hand side. The wife's part as a sexual partner is only 10 per cent while as a life partner she has 90 per cent participation and in that situation she is the right hand of the husband. By practising Praanaayaama and concentrating on this Chakra one can prevent the diseases concerned with lungs and heart. It is always

better to prevent the diseases (particularly in these two cases) because once a person has asthma, or other heart ailments it becomes difficult to practice Praanaayaama, etc.

Vishuddhi – is located near Thyroid gland. Thyroid is an important gland and as per medical science the most of the diseases of women are due to the disorder in this gland. This gland is connected with the endocrine system and metabolism. By concentrating on this Chakra and doing Praanaayaama one can activate this chakra and prevent the concerned diseases. While doing Kumbhaka one should place his chin at the pit of neck and stop the breath inside. This will activate the Chakra and also strengthen the gland. This strengthens the stem as well as various nerves and agents at the place. The neck exercise that prevents spondeolytis activates and strengthens this chakra, too. This pertains to Praanmaya Kosha.

Aajnaa – pertains to Manomaya Kosha and covers Pituitary gland and the Thalamus family of which Hypothalamus is the most important part. By practising Praanaayaama concentrating on this Chakra that is located on the forehead between the two eye brows (the spot where the women apply Bindee – the dot, or the priests apply Tilakam during rituals) this chakra is activated and that in turn strengthens the glands. Hypothalamus is a very special agent in the body that controls almost all agents, systems and nerves in the body. It is called biological clock. If suggested at the time of going to bed it alarms the person to rise at the time he wants. (I think that this plays a big role in timing the death, too but has not been medically approved yet. The medical science has only declared that it is not the heart that is the main cause of death but some system in the brain.) The

Hypothalamus releases harmones the most when it is thick darkness outside. It suggests that those who want to activate this chakra or strengthen the hypothalamus should get up as early as 3. o clock in the morning that is called Braahma Muhoorta and practice Praanaayaama and Aasanas at that time. By doing so one charges his physical and mental batteries that keep him active all day long and do not let him get tired. By strengthening Hypothalamus one can keep all the systems in the body healthy and in order that increases power of resistance in him and enables him to keep the diseases away. On the other hand this Chakra affects the Pituitary – the Master gland that is located just behind this Chakra almost an inch inside. From Yogic point of view this is called Aatma-Granthi and helps the soul in controlling senses and mind. Once the pituitary gland becomes active and makes the soul the master of the body, the person has clairvoyance. He can see not only the present events with a clear vision but can clearly see the Past and Future, too. This is called Third eye and the person who succeeds in developing it becomes Shiva. It is said that Shiva opened his third eye and spit fire that burnt the cupid. The sexual urge is the main enemy that does not allow a soul to elevate. As we know this urge has been the main cause in case of a number of highly placed persons that brought the bad name and washed off all good things done by them. This gland and Chakra helps a person to control this urge. At this Chakra the soul becomes the master of the body and is able to move further to have a glimpse of himself.

Soma – is located above Aajnaa Chakra at the spot from where the hairs start. When a person concentrates on it from inside all the clouds of tension, worries and anger are gone and he becomes very quiet and calm like moon called Soma in Sanskrit. This is

the Chakra where the soul realises itself and becomes perfect. It sees himself in the form of a moon (SOMA). This is the Chakra where Shiva (the blissful soul) meets Umaa (Paarvatee or Prajnaa) and she guides the soul toward God (Brahman).

Sahasraara Chakra – is called the lotus of thousand petals. It is located at the top of the head that remains soft in a child till the age of nine months. It is the point where the soul meets God every night in Sushupti. It is the point where the soul can attain to Brahman and get salvation. If a soul is able to transform the vital fluid into Brahmavarchas and bring it here he succeeds in accomplishing Samaadhi. A person who is able to meditate on the central point of this lotus, the source of the spiritual juice, enjoys the Bliss and the nectar of peace. The soul, having reached this place becomes Jyotirmaya – full of Spiritual Light. It is at this Chakra that the soul meets God and sees Him in the form of Sun – the Supreme Light and becomes one with Him.

How to meditate?

We have explained the 8 Chakras. It is not difficult to activate these Chakras. Just concentrate your mind and Praana at the place where a particular Chakra is located and the concerned Chakra will be activated. When we concentrate on the lower 3 Chakras we can see its result over different parts of Annamaya Kosha as detailed above. For affecting Praanamaya Kosha we should activate Anaahata Chakra. Here is the way for concentrating on it. Close your eyes, take your mind to the place where Anaahata Chakra is located, see a small lamp burning there. Slowly concentrate your mind on the flame and forget everything else. Keep looking at the flame for a while. You will see your Praanas rushing to the place. Take those Praanas

inside the arteries as well as the webs of lungs. It will have an effect on your lungs and heart and Praanamaya Kosha will be strengthened.

When we concentrate on Vishuddhi Chakra and chant 'O' the first letter of Om, it has a very soothing effect on thyroid and throat and by practising it daily we can develop a melodious voice. It will also have a very good effect on endocrine system and metabolism.

The real meditation starts from concentrating on Aajnaa Chakra. As explained earlier, the Aajnaa Chakra is the centre of Manomaya Kosha. When we meditate on it the soul, Praana and mind all the three assemble there and activate the Chakra. Here is the way to meditate on it. Close your eyes, chant Gaayatree Mantra in mind and take your soul to that place. You will see a small flame burning inside at the place in your forehead where the priest applies Tilakam. The third eye here is not horizontal like physical eyes but vertical like the thin flame rising from a small lamp. About an inch inside this place is the pituitary gland. Now take your soul, mind and Praanas to that gland that is hanging there like a small pea seed. Kindle the light there and continue looking at it until you get tired. The light will be very thin in the beginning but later it will gradually grow and take the form of a red Bindi of the size of a small pea seed. The concentration on the gland will activate Aajnaa Chakra that is nothing but the gland itself. That is why it is called 'Master gland'. The first result of this activation is that the soul becomes powerful, starts mastering the mind and Praana that makes the mind pure and energetic. Resultingly we develop our power of controlling senses and mind. The soul becomes the master of the body. We are able to control our anger, greed and other bad habits and emotions. The soul becomes so powerful that if someone denies anything to us at any time we

do not get angry but reconcile with the situation. We actually become Shiva and burn the cupid in us. We will never take initiative in sex that, otherwise becomes the main weakness of a person. This habit of controlling the sexual urge changes our outlook and energises the vital fluid, the most important substance in a person that helps him in moving on the path of spirituality. This is the original energy and is at the root of the power of resistance that helps not only in preventing diseases but also in resisting the bad emotions that block the spiritual progress of a person. The energy produced by this vital fluid is called 'Kundalinee'. Kundalinee means serpentine power. The Kundalinee is said to be lying idle in Moolaadhaara Chakra. We know that the source of the vital fuid is in Moolaadhaara. When a man ejaculates during the intercourse this fluid runs downwards through the penis and enters into the embryo and a number of sperms start racing like serpents with a hood in the front and a long tail and try to catch the ovary. When those very sperms start moving upwards in Sushumnaa of a Yogi they don't run but crawl and move towards the spiritual embryo located in the head in between the pituitary and pineal glands. They change into a spiritual power and help the soul. By mastering the mind and senses we are able to keep a balanced and peaceful mind even in adverse situations. We succeed here in practising Pratyaahaara and Dhaaranaa. We should go to Soma Chakra only after having succeeded at Aajnaa Chakra. Until and unless we achieve success on Aajnaa Chakra we should not think of going to the higher one. The self-realization is obtained by meditating on Aajnaa Chakra that prevents the soul from becoming slave to the passions, senses and emotions and enables it to realise the importance of the self. Once the soul becomes the master it is ready to move towards God.

Soma Chakra is the point where the soul has the glimpse of his own self . Actually, God starts helping the soul as soon as it meditates on the Aajnaa Chakra and it is HE Who enables the soul to achieve success at this step. Now, the soul leaves the mind and Praana behind at Aajnaa Chakra and reaches this Chakra alone. It is totally absorbed in meditation. There is nothing to bother it because it has trained the mind and senses well and they are able to take care of the rest of the body and its systems while it itself is enjoying the journey towards God. It is the very situation when a person writes a poem, an article or a book or a musician is totally absorbed in the music. It is the Divine power at Soma Chakra that guides or dictates the soul. That is why the artists keep writing, painting, speaking or singing without getting tired and enjoy their work of art. All these artists are in complete meditation when they work. They feel Divinity in their works and FEEL God. That is why when they come back from that high state and the people admire them for their presentation they realise that it was only due to God's Grace and they express their gratitude to Him only. When the soul meditates at this Chakra it perceives itself in the form of a full moon rising in the evening of Poornimaa. Up to Aajnaa Chakra the soul sees only a flame, Agni, but at Soma Chakra the Agni changes into a moon that is very soothing, cool and calm. It is not difficult to keep looking at the moon for hours. She does not tease the eyes. Similarly, here, too, the soul can keep looking at it for a long time. The moon so shining at this Chakra is nothing but the soul itself Himself. That is what is said in Upasthaana Mantra – "**Om, Udvayam Tamasaspari SVAH Pashyanta Uttaram. Devam Devatraa Sooryam Aganma Jyotiruttamam – first let us see 'SVAH' the light of the soul that is soothing and pleasing. Let us enjoy it first then we shall rise higher and see the Sun**

that is the final and the most splendorous Light. That is why the moon (of the second day of Shukla Paksha – waxing moon) is shown at Soma Chakra of Shiva. We should start seeing the full moon and then gradually shed off the rays one by one until there is no moon to be seen there. But we should be able to meditate at that point even without moon and see the blue ocean with undisturbing waves. We should feel the cool and calm atmosphere of the night. Then slowly go up towards Sahasraara Chakra.

When the soul rises and moves towards Sahasraara Chakra which is in the form of ceiling at the top of head, it sees the Sun rising. The sun is very soothing and pleasing to the eyes like the rising sun in the morning. God for a Yogi is never like a bright sun that teases the eyes and which a person is unable to look at. That is what the Mantra "**Pooshan Ekarshe Yama Soorya Praajaapatya Vyooha Rashmeen Samooha Tejo Yatte Roopam Kalyaanatamam Tatte Pashyaami....**" In Eashopanishad that means "**O God, please do away with all of Your rays, collect them together in You so that I am able to see Your benevolent and soothing form full of splendour**". Yes, God here is not like a sun of noontime shining with all force. That form of sun is Rudra. The devotee wants to see God in Shiva form. That form of God is available in the sun rising in early morning that stays only for a few minutes. The Yogi devotee sees God at Shasraara Chakra only in that benevolent, soothing and pleasing form that brings peace in him. Along with such a sun the Yogi also enjoys the tiny drops of rain that drenches the soul with the wetness of Love, Grace and Bliss. Who will wish to return early from such a beautiful scenery to the worldly atmosphere filled with the heat of scorching sun? The devotee remains there for long and enjoys the meditation. The soul becomes one with that

splendour and I and You become ONE just like the moon loses its separate identity and becomes one with sun on an Amaavaasyaa (new moon) day. That is the perfection a soul is so anxious to achieve and once it achieves it its desire is fulfilled.

"Svalpamapyasya Dharmasya Traayayate Mahato Bhayaat" - Gita. Even a short period of this oneness in a small quantity keeps a soul away from the highest kinds of dangers of life. As the quantity and period of meditation increases the soul enjoys more and more tranquillity and blissfulness.

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